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**NAVAL
POSTGRADUATE
SCHOOL**

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM: THE
CHALLENGE AND THE OPPORTUNITY**

by

Robert B. Deardorff

December 2010

Thesis Co-Advisors:

Anders Strindberg
Paul Jonathan Smith

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**COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM: THE CHALLENGE AND THE
OPPORTUNITY**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

It is crucial for the United States to confront the increasing incidence of Americans who turn to violence against their fellow citizens in support of Islamist terrorists. This thesis explores the application of “soft power,” the government’s ability to mitigate the recruitment and radicalization of new terrorists by attraction rather than coercion, in order to prevent “homegrown” terrorism. Methods include a comparative policy analysis of counterterrorism models in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, a survey of conservative Muslim leaders in the Houston area, and an extensive literature review. Recent arrests portend an increasing threat if the United States continues along its “hard power” path exclusively. Potential solutions require active engagement by government leaders, coordinated messaging, and continuing contact between government agencies and vulnerable communities. A broad national strategy, refined and implemented at a regional level, is required. Strategies that balance hard and soft power separate radicalizing influences from their recruiting pool, alter the social context of potential recruits in favor of democratic process, and make partners of potential antagonists. Regional Outreach and Operational Coordination Centers (ROOCC) offer a mechanism to develop and support strategies that combine government, nongovernment, and community leaders to combat terrorism at the ideological level.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIVD	General Intelligence and Security Service [Algemene Inlichtingen - en Veiligheidsdienst]
CCE	Creativity, Culture and Education Program
CMT	Case Management Teams
COIN	Counterinsurgency
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOJ	Department of Justice
EPA	Emergency Provisions Act
EPSIPTC	Extension of the Scope for Investigation and Prosecution of Terrorist Crimes
EU	European Union
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FISA	Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act
FIG	Field Intelligence Group
GO	Government Office
HSAS	Homeland Security Advisory System
HSCG	Homeland Security Coordination Group
ILP	Intelligence-Led Policing
IMES	Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies
IRA	Irish Republican Army
JTTF	Joint Terrorism Task Force
KNIL	Royal Netherlands East Indies Army [Kroninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger]
KSM	Khalid Sheikh Mohammed
NCTb	National Coordinator for Counterterrorism [National Coordinator Terrorsmebestrijding]
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
NGO	Nongovernment organization
NIP	National Implementation Plan
NORTHCOM	Northern Command
NSC	National Security Council

NSS 2010	National Security Strategy 2010
ODNI	Office of the Director of National Intelligence
OSCT	Office for Security and Counter-terrorism
PACT	Partners and Community Together
PCSO	Police Community Support Officers
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
PTA	Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act
PVA	Prevention of Violence (Temporary Provisions) Act
RICU	Research, Information, and Communications Unit
ROOCC	Regional Outreach and Operational Coordination Center
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SIT	Social Identity Theory
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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I. INTRODUCTION

Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat.

-Sun Tzu

A. PROBLEM STATEMENT—BACKGROUND

According to a recent report issued by the former heads of the 9/11 Commission,

Our long-held belief that homegrown terrorism couldn't happen here has ... created a situation where we are today stumbling blindly through the legal, operational and organizational minefield of countering terrorist radicalization and recruitment occurring in the United States.... [As a result NCTC and a National Security Council (NSC) and representatives from 13 federal agencies are currently] ... looking at ways to counter violent extremism within the U.S. and abroad. (Baldor, 2010)

While NCTC national-level policies must be authored by a centralized component, it is important to understand that execution of counterterrorism policies will be implemented at the regional and local level, where local contexts provide unique challenges and opportunities (Moghaddam, 2006, p. 11). Those charged with counterterrorism missions would benefit from enhanced understanding derived from trusting interpersonal relationships with referent leaders of at-risk and immigrant Muslim populations. Counterterrorism leaders must also coordinate among all layers of government to develop regionally and locally tailored strategies that employ both hard and soft power.

Current strategies to prevent, detect, and disrupt terrorist activity in the United States are vague and focus on disrupting already planned attacks or the physical security of critical infrastructure. This is a reactive policy. While aggressive response to a known threat or vulnerability is a critical component for any counterterrorism strategy, this posture forces the nation to continually respond to situations that are already dangerous, a situation akin to treating symptoms, rather than the underlying disease. Failure to adapt our approach to terrorism ensures that the government will remain on the defensive. More importantly, such a one-dimensional strategy is unsustainable over the long haul. The

homeland security community should develop a holistic plan to prevent the development of homegrown terrorists and the maturation of domestic terrorist threats to complement existing counterterrorism measures. To be most effective, the national strategy should permeate federal, state, and local approaches to both counterterrorism and social policy.

The reactive posture of the United States government was an understandable result of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when the government was faced with confronting imminent follow-on attacks. The government reorganized to facilitate intelligence sharing and to coordinate counterterrorism activities. Key among these changes were the creation of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Defense's Northern Command (NORTHCOM), and reformation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Each of these organizations, in whole or in part, is charged with preventing terrorist attacks in the homeland.

To complicate matters further, the threat posed by al Qaeda has evolved in form and function. Experts disagree regarding the nature of international terrorism today (Sciolino & Schmitt, 2008). One side of the argument suggests that al Qaeda has survived the attempts of the United States to destroy or dismantle it and that al Qaeda continues to represent the principal, though not the only, threat to the United States (Hoffman 2006a; 2008). The other position posits that much of al Qaeda's core leadership cadre has been captured or killed and that therefore today's threat is from relatively disorganized, self-generating terrorist cells that operate independent of al Qaeda direction (Sageman, 2008). If the former position is correct, the United States can expect a continuation of dramatic, internationally directed terrorist attacks that may be years in the planning, highly sophisticated, and strategically designed. The implication of the latter finding is that the United States can expect isolated cells with relatively less capability to conduct attacks, and those based on opportunity, rather than a broader strategy. An accurate portrayal of the threat likely falls somewhere between these positions, with al Qaeda's main leaders still alive but operating at reduced capability, while self-radicalizing extremists and "wannabe terrorist" organizations develop and act in support of similar ideology. We face

two differentiated threats: one from al Qaeda and associated external groups and an emerging threat from those radicalized in the United States.

As a result of the structural changes and the evolving threat, there are three fundamental conditions that complicate the federal government's efforts to mitigate future terrorist threats to the United States:

- 1) Lack of unified command and holistic counterterrorism strategy. Overlapping missions, lack of clear guidance, and informal coordination points among agencies result in inefficient effort.
- 2) A short-term, reactive approach to terrorism that focuses principally on the external threat and ignores radicalization of American Muslims.
- 3) Lack of a coordinated engagement strategy, resulting in a lack of understanding of the underlying causes of radicalism, an inability to build trusting relationships, and an inadequate intelligence base within the Muslim-American community.

No government strategy can altogether eliminate the threat of terrorist activity, but well-reasoned, concerted efforts may mitigate the likelihood of terrorist group formation. Positive and trusting relationships between homeland security authorities and religious and minority group leaders may facilitate the identification of threats as they emerge. A concerted engagement strategy might provide opportunities to shape community opinion and to disrupt terrorist threats in their earliest stages. The inclusion of soft power tactics to win or keep the "hearts and minds" of Muslim-American citizens is critical to long-term success against terrorism by Islamic extremists.

With no grand counterterrorist strategy, progress toward goals and objectives is difficult to judge. Although current disruption tactics are an intrinsic part of a national counterterrorism strategy, such a one-dimensional policy will require more resources, produce a false sense of crisis that jades the public, increase "burnout" of those charged with the mission, and tend to alienate the very portion of the public we depend on to help identify and confront the threat. The United States owes its public more than this. With no clear "owner" of the counterterrorism mission, there is no authority that provides guidance for collaborative effort, nor is there a holistic strategy to address radicalization.

Federal, state, and local resources are spent on agencies that work toward identical objectives independently, rather than collaborating to address common goals. Duplicative efforts reduce the potential of these organizations to address other important missions that also contribute to national security and public safety.

Few terrorist groups end due to military action (Jones & Libicki, 2008), which implies that the terrorist strategy currently pursued abroad will not “win” the war on terror. In the domestic environment, military action against terrorists is not a realistic option, and as such tactics have demonstrated overseas (Pew Research Center, 2007), heavy-handed tactics can create sympathy for the terrorists’ cause. Like any complex problem set, the causes of terrorist activity in the United States are numerous and vary from group to group—and perhaps from individual to individual. The development and execution of engagement strategies would benefit from a less centralized structure to assist in understanding local dynamics that may exacerbate radicalization and inform national policies—ultimately providing more efficient methods to win the “battle of ideas” that underpins Islamist ideology.¹ Reactive counterterrorism strategies, on the other hand, ignore the development of new threats and thus require more and more resources to disrupt them. It stands to reason that as threats continue to emerge, the odds of an opponent’s success are higher.

These challenges warrant further research, because they present an opportunity for the United States government to enhance its capability to prevent not just terrorist attacks, but also the formation of new terrorist groups, particularly in the homeland. Additional research may result in more efficient application of resources to the counterterrorism mission, may increase the effectiveness of the homeland security community, and may contribute to a culture both inside and outside the government that enables concerted action to prevent terrorist attacks.

It is not clear how the United States currently implements best practices or lessons learned from its own agencies or from the experiences of other governments to increase effectiveness and efficiency of the domestic counterterrorism effort. Homeland security

¹ For the purpose of this thesis, the term “Islamist” refers to one who views Islam not only as a religion but as a political philosophy that is incompatible with democracy.

agencies in the United States do not function as learning organizations and are not structured to do so. The homeland security community should explore the creation of a holistic strategy that is informed by other Western governments and the study of terrorist groups. Such a strategy must be applied through a unified effort and with the flexibility needed to address a constantly evolving threat.

B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Is the United States counterterrorism strategy correctly aligned to counter the terrorist threat?

Is the current organizational structure of the homeland security community appropriate to address the nature of the terrorist threat?

What strategic lessons from the counterterrorism experiences of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands can and should be applied in the United States?

How can the homeland security community leverage intelligence and “soft power” tactics to build more effective antiterrorism/antiradicalization policies and initiatives?

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Understanding Radicalization

The academic study of terrorist groups since September 11 has been prolific and provides insight regarding how terrorist groups form, become motivated to violence, and eventually lose their appeal to the public—ultimately resulting in the terrorists group’s failure and disintegration. Court filings, government studies, and Congressional testimony further expand information from recognized subject-matter experts that will inform this study. Bruce Hoffman and Brian Jenkins have produced substantial works that suggest radicalization is a principal concern for the foreseeable future. Marc Sageman has also contributed significant research regarding the psychological background of known terrorists. These works and others will be explored to define the challenge of and potential strategies to address radicalization.

Social identity theory (SIT) “is based on an insistence that human action needs to be understood in its social context.” (Reicher, 2004) This theory may provide a foundation for understanding the radicalization phenomenon, but there are disagreements regarding its core components. Rational actor theory, which suggests that most individuals tend to act in accordance with their perceived best interests, will also inform this study. Likewise, instrumental approaches contribute to the study at a macrolevel, when exploring the nature of terrorist groups. Sufficient discourse is available in academic literature to explore how these theories might apply to counterterrorism strategies.

The psychology of terrorists has been explored in depth over the past 40 years. By building a holistic strategy based on our understanding of the behavior of terrorist groups, we may be able to expedite the demise of terrorist groups. There is sufficient literature on group behavior to inform this thesis.

2. Muslim-American Perspectives on Countering Islamist Ideology

There is little published work regarding the attitudes of Muslim-Americans and their willingness or ability to accept an identity that has more affinity to “American-ness” than ethnic and religious roots. Sparse research is documented regarding likely sources of support and influence in countering Islamic radicalization, although the academic community seems to accept that Muslim-Americans enjoy better relationships with government and the general public in the United States than in Europe. Interviews will focus on leadership of local religious and ethnic organizations. Information from these interviews may identify group characteristics that indicate a willingness to assist the intelligence community in countering “Islam versus the United States” rhetoric.

3. Smart Practices of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

The essence of insurgent warfare remains constant—the insurgent must have the passive support of a large segment of the population in order to succeed against the existing government or occupying force. The Irish Republic Army Chief of Staff Cathal Goulding admitted in 1962, “Without the support of the majority of the people, we just

couldn't succeed" (Geraghty, 1998, p. 351). Similarly, global jihadists² must have the support of a segment of the population, albeit much less support is needed for these terrorists to accomplish their goals in the United States than for an insurgency that intends to overthrow and replace a standing government. The importance of public support has resonated through insurgent and terrorist organizations during the last half-century and has been employed for over a decade by al Qaeda and similarly inclined Islamic militants here in the United States. As Steven Metz notes:

Insurgency ... combines continuity and change, an enduring essence and a shifting nature. Its essence is protracted, asymmetric violence; political, legal, and ethical ambiguity; and the use of complex terrain, psychological warfare, and political mobilization. It arises when a group decides that the gap between their political expectations and the opportunities afforded them is unacceptable and can only be remedied by force. (2007, p. 1)

While core al Qaeda does not appear to seek replacement of the governmental system in the United States, it does seek to alternately coerce the American public to alter its foreign policy and to promote a "United States versus Islam" ideology in the segment of the population from which it seeks funding, materiel, and recruits. Some of the characteristics of insurgent warfare, as described by Goulding and Metz, have parallels in the homeland security community's counterterrorism efforts. Like the creation of the DHS and the restructuring of the FBI after the attacks of September 11, recent struggles with insurgents have resulted in a complete overhaul of United States military strategy for counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan (United States Army, 2009). The Department of Defense altered its structure and its tactics to focus on the mass population—it may likewise be necessary for the domestic security community to reassess the value of "soft power" (Nye, 2003) in order to frustrate and disrupt the appeal of Islamist ideologies in the homeland.

² While it is recognized that the term "jihadist" has both positive and negative connotations based on its context, for the purpose of this thesis, the term is used to describe Islamists who support, promote, participate in, or otherwise subscribe to the use of violence to further Islamist ideology.

Multiple studies of successful counterinsurgency (COIN) operations are available in academic work and peer-reviewed journals. The experiences of the United Kingdom in Malaysia and Ireland; the Peruvian struggle versus the Shining Path; and the United States' experience in El Salvador all lend broad principles for the development of a domestic counterterrorist strategy.

Due to the prominence of asymmetrical warfare in modern history and its impact on foreign policy, the literature available on this topic is dense and rich in military tactics. The body of work is less informative when applied to the domestic sociological and political tactics. The literature is sufficient only to scope key points of COIN strategies, points also readily available in Western counterterrorism practices. COIN provides key principles but they are of limited direct applicability to a domestic counterterrorism strategy.

4. Western Strategies for Counterterrorism

Several Western countries have coordinated governmental responses to the threat of terrorism. Their approaches vary, as does the applicability of these strategies in the United States. The United Kingdom and the Netherlands have developed more specific “radicalization models” that identify key points where intervention might stop or reverse the radicalization process. The UK proposed community-based interaction with an aim “to reduce the risk [to the state] ... and its interests overseas from international terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence” (United Kingdom [UK], 2009, p. 5). Similarly, the Netherlands executes “a broad-based policy aimed at increasing resistance to [radicalization] ... a society that is resilient enough to resist the growth of violent radicalization” (Remkes & Donner, 2005).

The Netherlands, too, changed its way of doing business to fit the counterterrorism mission. A joint service center was created to coordinate the counterterrorism mission across multiple government agencies. Like the UK, counterterrorism specialists permeate the counterterrorism effort from the national level to local police boards that devise local strategies to counter radicalization. Local & municipal decision makers coordinate social strategies to prevent polarization in

individual communities. The common philosophy behind these strategies is that government at all levels must understand and act on “new terrorism” as an ideological battle. Ideology—not race, or ethnic derivation, or cultural identity—is perceived as a threat and is explicitly targeted, although these factors may serve to isolate minority populations from the general society.

Conversely, the United States’ counterterrorism efforts are predominantly reactive and tend to function in ways that address identified plots rather than radicalization. As such, the homeland security community faces the dynamic nature and complexity of terrorism threats with no “end game” goal, multiple definitions of the domestic security mission (Bellavita, 2008), and overlapping jurisdictions that can cause internecine rivalries.

Sufficient literature exists in criminology and sociological studies to suggest that a version of “community policing” may provide a model that should be adopted to enhance intelligence collection. A Department of Justice (DOJ) review found that when police and communities develop a partnership based on trust, the public is more likely to report suspicious activity (United States Department of Justice [USDOJ], 2003).

Some of the foreign counterterrorism strategies have acknowledged the importance of countering an internal threat, but none establishes specific goals or provides metrics that might indicate success or failure. The inability to measure the quality of government-Muslim relationships poses a substantial challenge to engagement strategies. There has been little research that explains how best to employ community outreach to diminish radicalization. The thesis will contribute to this area of literature.

5. Conclusion

There is sufficient literature and academic research to define the counterterrorism mission of the United States as an ideological war that will be fought on American soil (Abu 'Ubeid, 2002). This point was emphasized in 2009 by mujahedeen training in Raleigh, North Carolina; exportation of al Shabaab terrorists from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Somalia; the terrorist attack at Fort Hood, Texas, and an attempted aircraft bombing in Detroit, Michigan. These events demonstrated beyond any doubt that Islamist

radicalization has reached the heartland of the homeland. No longer can we afford to ignore Islamist radicalization in the United States. This thesis will recommend proactive “soft” strategies to address Islamist terrorism by actively countering radicalization based on lessons learned from COIN, best practices from other nations, and the study of terrorist groups.

D. HYPOTHESES OR TENTATIVE SOLUTIONS

The central claims of this thesis are:

1. Long-term success in counterterrorism is dependent on disruption of the radicalization process.
2. A network-based structure is needed to effectively counter religious/ideological terrorism in the long term. A regional, joint service structure is needed.
3. Interpersonal engagement between the government and both religious and cultural groups is necessary to counter violent ideologies over the long term.
4. A collective strategy must be introduced to develop and guide a national doctrine that permeates every level of the counterterrorism effort. For this reason, the collective strategy must consolidate leadership authority of the counterterrorism mission in a way that includes leaders at the federal, state, and major city levels.
5. The leadership of such a team must be well positioned to predict community reaction to a plethora of stimuli, from foreign policy to law enforcement action, as well as to influence community actions through information sharing and public messaging. For this reason, the coordination team must exercise sufficient legitimate and perhaps budgetary power to directly impact operations.

Academic research reveals that terrorist groups are rarely defeated by military power alone. Much more often, negotiation and policing are the keys to success (Jones & Libicki, 2008). In order for domestic policing to be most effective, detailed intelligence is

required, and that comes only through interaction with the target population. Moreover, engagement is necessary to develop understanding of the community's grievances—the first step in addressing valid concerns of populations that feel disenfranchised. Informed by direct interaction, the government can devise practical solutions to radicalization. Such interaction might also increase public perception of the government and support efforts to collect human intelligence in a noncoercive manner from communities that are likely to be most closely associated with individuals who are in the radicalization process.

Evidence that a segment of the Muslim-American population is inclined to support efforts to counter radicalization within its own community is demonstrated in Congressional testimony, on websites of Islamic and ethno-cultural organizations, and in public statements. In some instances, state, local, and federal agencies have enjoyed success in developing positive relationships with Muslim communities and as a result have reported an increase in intelligence collection. A few religious and civil libertarian organizations publicly promote engagement with law enforcement or try to serve as a bridge between the community and law enforcement. If trusting relationships between the government and influential community leaders could be leveraged, these organizations might be key partners in counter-radicalization, particularly with first- and second-generation citizens who are perhaps more isolated than integrated in American culture.

Centers of influence from both religious and cultural groups can serve to effectively counter violent ideologies if they are engaged in collaborative relationships with government agencies. The objective of government and community leaders should be to deprive terrorist groups of public support. Even engagement with leaders who are hostile to the government might serve to inform local policies or disruption strategies. Sociological studies provide insight regarding how law enforcement leaders can better understand how Muslim organizations interact within and between one another. Through interpersonal contact across a broad spectrum of Muslim groups and enhanced cultural awareness, government officials may better serve the communities' needs and better understand the dynamics that drive extremist groups' behavior.

By establishing mutual trust, the moderate Muslim-American community and the government can collaborate against violent extremism and strengthen our resistance to

the “United States versus Islam” narrative. The collective effort can thus deny or mitigate the principle resource they need for success—support of the Muslim. A collaborative relationship may also facilitate identification of those being radicalized and cognitive openings in extremists during periods when they might be vulnerable to recruitment or susceptible to compromise. As noted by Paul Davis, Islamic militants “often mistrust and fight among each other, disagree and vary in conviction. It should be possible, then, to turn them against each other by disinformation or deception” (Davis & Jenkins, 2002, p. 47).

A common theme across the spectrum of asymmetrical warfare, from COIN to foreign counterterrorism, is the need for an overarching strategy, a doctrine that is administered by a centralized authority and serves as a base of context for independent actions. Successful strategies are flexible and decentralized in their execution, with great emphasis on diminishing or preventing the spread of the opposition’s influence on the local population. The United States should learn from these experiences to develop a grand strategy, a formal doctrine that is informed by the results of ideological struggles.

In order to counter the appeal of terrorism, it is necessary for the government to identify and fully engage with centers of influence (referent leaders) of at-risk and immigrant populations across the whole spectrum of society. Homeland security representatives must be willing to listen, seek to understand, and address legitimate grievances presented by the community. Federal agencies should play a key role in this endeavor due to the national security interest, as well as their ability to impact matters of great concern to the Islamic community: foreign policy, immigration, customs matters, and civil rights. Regional variances and enforcement opportunities allow action at state and local levels, thus state and local collaboration is critical to successful implementation. Many immigrant communities derive from a tribal or patrician background where trust is dependent on familiarity and regular interaction, further emphasizing the need for continuity in government efforts. Critics of federally run operations will likely suggest that state and local police are better placed for this mission through their daily interaction with the public and police departments’ long experience in community policing. But implementation of community policing efforts varies widely—like counterterrorism,

there is no standardization of effort, no formal implementation of best practices. The proposed outreach is focused at centers of influence: state and major-city chiefs should be incorporated in the coordination effort, but they will be restricted by their individual budgets, local politics, their public safety mission, and other variables. Further, intelligence collection pursuant to the Federal Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), which plays a critical part in national security investigations, is not available to state and local entities. For these reasons, state and local officials might play a critical, but supporting role in the counterterrorism effort. The coordination team could also be well placed to assess how federal and local actions impact identified communities.

Likewise, fusion centers may also be presented as a logical integration point for this mission, but the existing status of fusion centers prohibits a counterterrorism mission in many cases; communication between fusion centers and a center of analysis is not currently established, and the challenge of measuring tangible benefits makes the mission politically infeasible to adequately fund from state and local treasuries. A holistic strategy will necessarily introduce the potential for competing interests and alternative resolutions for many circumstances. Through a unified command at regional levels, such conflicts can be resolved in a manner consistent with an overarching strategy. Such a networked structure might allow operations, information/propaganda, liaison intelligence, and analysis to be coordinated to maximum benefit.

The problem of homegrown terrorism bears some commonality to a fight for “hearts and minds” in an insurgency, although there are significant differences as well. The United States does not face violent civil unrest, and therefore domestic counterterrorism efforts would logically be much less aggressive than in a COIN scenario. Similarly, only a very small portion of the indigenous population supports Islamic extremist ideology, and thus propaganda and “messaging” efforts would be commensurately constrained.

Al Qaeda has declared a “war of ideas” against the United States (Abu 'Ubeid, 2002). It is logical for the domestic intelligence community to engage on the same “battlefield.” Refusing to engage in the war of ideas is akin to surrendering this central element of the struggle. An understanding of the interpersonal nature of immigrant

Muslim cultures, their inherent distrust of domestic law enforcement and intelligence services due to cultural echoes from their nations of origin, and our own missteps in the wake of September 11, warrant an approach that addresses these issues from an ideological perspective.

Additional research may result in more efficient application of counterterrorism resources, increase the effectiveness of the homeland security community, and develop a homeland security culture that enables concerted action by the government and the public to both prevent terrorist group formation and respond in the aftermath of terrorist attacks.

E. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

Literature: No overarching national strategy for counterterrorism or counter-radicalization exists. This research will consolidate pertinent information that may assist in developing counter-radicalization policies. This is important because, if the appeal of global jihadists is left unchecked, it will likely result in more radicalization in domestic populations.

Future research efforts: This thesis will likely assist future research efforts of others because it will provide a starting point. The research conducted will support the evolution of domestic intelligence and law enforcement activity to a proactive model that engages the public.

Immediate consumer/customer: The president of the United States, the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, the director of the FBI, and the director of the National Counterterrorism Center are immediate consumers. This research will identify the benefits of a holistic strategy, as well as suggest new structures and policies to support the “long war.”

Homeland security practitioners and national leaders: This research will present baseline information for further research and development of local and regional strategies to counter the long-term threat of terrorism. Potential benefits may include increased long-term efficiency, intelligence collection, and establishment of venues for expression of grievances.

F. METHOD

Since September 11, agencies conducting the counterterrorism mission in the United States have developed strategies independent of a national architecture and have favored enforcement action over “soft power” tactics (Nye, 2004). Alternative strategies have been and are being applied by other Western governments. In order to evaluate these alternative approaches against each other as well as against the status quo in the United States (i.e., an aggressive defense strategy), it is useful to identify a framework that might lead to a proactive strategy to mitigate the recruitment and radicalization of new terrorists. For purposes of this thesis, a comparative policy analysis will be conducted to identify best practices that might be applied in the United States. Each counterterrorism strategy will be analyzed using four parameters:

1. Is the organizational structure of the counterterrorism effort aligned with the threat?
2. Does the strategy ensure “unity of effort” across government agencies to prevent the development of terrorist cells?
3. Does the strategy provide tools to shape the environment in which the ideological struggle is waged?
4. Is the population’s social identity impacted by the government in a way that is positive or negative for national security?

Academic research in the fields of history, security policy, political science, and military science, numerous studies by nongovernment agencies and think tanks, and public statements by government officials and official testimony provide a plethora of data relevant to the organizational structure of Western governments. Likewise, counter-radicalization policies have been researched and discussed in several Western governments—in places like the United Kingdom and Australia, as well as in non-Western nations like Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Similar strategies have been employed through community policing programs for disadvantaged youth with positive and tangible results. Research in the social sciences defines the nature of group psychology and methods to impact interrelations at both the individual and organizational levels. And,

finally, the results of policies implemented by the United States and other countries to counter terrorism will speak to those efforts' impact on government-public relationships. Beyond the published work described above, it may also be possible to interview current and former architects of U.S. counterterrorism strategies. These current and former officials may provide insight regarding alternatives that are politically feasible or might be applied at a later date—such as after the next dramatic terrorist attack on American soil or following the capture or death of Osama bin Laden.

In order to improve the existing domestic counterterrorism policy, the following steps should be considered:

1. A national counterterrorism doctrine should be developed that incorporates both short- and long-term tactics to counter terrorist activity and the development of new terrorists.
2. Strategies should include “soft power” tactics to influence the social construct of targeted communities, continually assess new influences, and coordinate the actions of homeland security agencies in order to diminish the impact of radicalizing influences.
3. Regional Outreach and Operational Coordination Centers (ROOCC) should be established to ensure a coordinated approach to disrupt violent extremism. ROOCCs must include representatives of federal, state, and local authorities who work together as a team to develop strategic partners outside the government and to coordinate hard- and soft-power activities of the government so that these efforts are complementary..
4. The president of the United States should issue an overarching counterterrorism strategy that includes provisions to mitigate the threat of homegrown terrorism through a unified command.

II. COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY IN THE UNITED STATES AFTER SEPTEMBER 11

The art of choosing the right direction is also the art of creating new forces and new strength.

-General Vo Nguyen Giap

A. CURRENT THREAT

There is consensus that the United States faces a terrorist that is fundamentally different from the threat prior to and in the years immediately following September 11, 2001, but experts disagree about exactly what that means for national security (Sciolino & Schmidt, 2008). The media sometimes exaggerate disagreements regarding the nature of the threat, which in turn results in public debate related to the threat posed by al Qaeda and affiliate organizations. One side of the argument suggests that al Qaeda has survived the attempts of the United States to destroy or dismantle it and that al Qaeda continues to represent the principal but not the only threat to the United States.

The other position posits that much of al Qaeda's core leadership cadre has been captured or killed, and therefore the threat from the organization has been curtailed—instead today's threat is from relatively leaderless self-generating terrorist cells that operate independently of al Qaeda direction.³ If the former position is correct, the United States can expect a continuation of dramatic, internationally directed terrorist attacks that are sometimes years in planning, highly sophisticated, and strategically designed. The implication of the latter position is that the United States can expect isolated cells with relatively less capability to conduct attacks based on opportunity rather than a broader strategy. Merely a year ago, the threat posed by these “wannabe terrorists” was poorly understood and perhaps underestimated:

Homegrown Muslim extremists who have little if any connection to known terrorist organizations have not launched a successful attack in the United States. The handful of homegrown extremists who have sought to

³ For a concise summary of the debate, see Hoffman's review of Sageman's book, *Leaderless Jihad* (2008).

strike within the Homeland since 9/11 have lacked the necessary tradecraft and capability to conduct or facilitate sophisticated attacks. (Leiter, 2009, p. 3)

However, events during the past twelve months have altered the national threat assessment and raised the nation's appreciation of a terrorist threat from both external and internal actors:

During the past year our nation has dealt with the most significant developments in the terrorist threat to the homeland since 9/11.... The range of al Qaeda core affiliated, allied, and inspired US citizens and residents plotting against the Homeland ... has become more complex and underscores the challenges of identifying and countering a more diverse range of Homeland plotting. (Leiter, 2010)

Today's threat therefore derives externally, from foreign powers like al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, as well from some portion of the American population that identifies with and has proven susceptible to al Qaeda's ideology. Americans should take little comfort in the fact that self-directed terrorists have not conducted sophisticated attacks in the homeland to this point—acts of domestic terrorism and spree killing in the United States during the last two decades vividly demonstrate that small self-radicalizing groups are very difficult to identify and have the capacity to conduct attacks that have devastating physical, social, and economic impact.⁴

B. BALANCED POWER STRATEGIES

The purpose of hard power is essentially to diminish the enemy's ability to conduct physical attacks. The purpose of soft power is to stop the flow of new terrorist recruits. Neither tack alone is likely to mitigate conflict, but when exercised together, the odds of diminishing the terrorist threat are increased. According to many terrorism experts, such policies are mostly doomed to fail at truly *preventing* terrorism because they “only target those individuals whose identities have already been transformed” into

⁴ For instance, highly publicized violent attacks like the Oklahoma City bombing (1995), the Washington, D.C. sniper attacks (2002), and the Columbine school murders (1999) demonstrate the potential impact of “wannabe” and self-directed terrorists. It is likely that such acts, if conducted in a polarized social context by those subscribing to Islamist ideologies, might have an even more profound effect on society than previously experienced.

terrorists (Moghaddam, 2006 p. 127). Instead, a holistic approach—one that addresses the conditions that result in social polarization and in-group/out-group violence—is required to win an asymmetrical conflict.

An historical review of terrorist groups supports this theory: terrorist groups were actually more likely to attain their goals than be destroyed when only coercive tactics were employed by the government. When political, intelligence, and policing strategies were employed, terrorist groups were much more likely to fail (Jones and Libicki, 2008). This suggests that stopping terrorist acts and diminishing the recruitment of new terrorists requires active engagement between the government and the American Muslim population. As noted by the 9/11 Commission, the United States should “engage in the struggle of ideas” (Kean & Hamilton, 2004, p.375).

Since 2001, the United States has not considered domestic applications of soft power. Instead, and by default, the United States has employed a counterterrorism strategy that leans almost exclusively toward hard power. This is likely the result of the lack of an overarching counterterrorism strategy. National Security Strategy 2010 (NSS 2010) provides a catalyst to develop an overarching strategy. To engage in a battle of ideas, it is necessary to identify the threat.

C. HOMEGROWN TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES

The formal, organized threat from bin Laden and core al Qaeda has been severely diminished by military force abroad and through law enforcement in the homeland (Leiter, 2010a). But despite progress against al Qaeda, the Islamist narrative apparently remains in tact. Radicalization and polarization in the homeland are evidenced by the increasing numbers of radicalized individuals leaving the United States to fight in Islamist causes abroad, fourteen disrupted terrorist attacks in the last two years (Dilanian, 2010), and Americans like Adam Gadahn in Pakistan and Abu Mansour al-Amriki in Somalia, who now serve leading roles for the al Qaeda and its affiliates. These developments are indicative of a long-term threat to national security. Political vitriol regarding the “Ground Zero Mosque” and the social divisions revealed through the proposed “Burn the Koran Day” in Gainesville, Florida, further indicate that the

polarization of American society may be on the increase. It appears that the battle of ideas⁵ promised by al Qaeda's doctrine has proven its ideology more resilient than its core leadership. Today's strategic threat is therefore not the short-term physical assault, but the social and ideological impact of polarized identities—the development, recruitment, and inspiration of new terrorists that might undermine the nation's way of life, its civil liberties, and the way Americans go about their lives together.

Measuring domestic radicalization is, of course, a difficult challenge because the term “radical” itself implies deviation from a baseline and is a relative term. “Violent extremists” and “terrorists” are likewise difficult numbers to quantify in the U.S. population because such individuals logically seek to operate clandestinely. It can, however, be judged that “radicalization” and homegrown terrorists are on the rise in the United States through anecdotal evidence. Some may assess that domestic radicalization in the United States lags behind that observed in other Western nations, but the 19 arrests associated with homegrown, “jihadist-inspired, terrorist plots by American citizens or legal permanent residents” (Bjelopera & Randol, 2010)⁶ between May, 2009 and August, 2010 indicate that radicalization should be a major cause of concern. The increasing number of U.S. citizens who are joining (or attempting to join) the Islamist camp (Levitt & Jacobson, 2010) promises the threat of increased violent extremism associated with this cause. Examples of this radicalization in 2009 and 2010 include, but are not limited to:

- American citizens departing the United States to fight with the al Qaeda-associated al Shabaab in Somalia (Condon & Forliti, 2009);
- Carlos Bledsoe of Little Rock, Arkansas, who murdered military recruiters in a drive-by shooting;

⁵ William Lind, the first to describe Fourth Generation Wars, articulated greatest concern for a form of warfare that combined terrorism, high technology, and the following additional elements: a nonnational or transnational base, such as an ideology or religion, a direct attack on the enemy's culture, and highly sophisticated psychological warfare, especially through manipulation of the media, particularly television news. (Lind et al., (1989), pp. 22–26). These are the American military experts referred to by Abu Ubeid below).

⁶ Appendix A of the referenced report provides a summary of each of the 40 post-September 11 homegrown jihadist plots and attacks in chronological order.

- Najibullah Zazi of Denver, Colorado, who led a plot to attack New York City's mass transit system;
- Colleen R. LaRose, a.k.a "Jihad Jane" and Jamie Paulin Ramirez of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Denver, Colorado, respectively, who conspired to kill a Swedish artist for drawing a picture of the prophet Mohammed's head on the body of a dog;
- Nidal Hasan, from Fort Hood, Texas, who is alleged to have murdered fellow soldiers as they underwent processing for deployment to Iraq; and
- Faisal Shahzad of Bridgeport, Connecticut, who attempted to explode a car bomb in New York City.

The "immunity" of American Muslims to violent Islamist ideology has been demonstrably compromised. A recent summation of the terrorism threat goes directly at a concern for the "homegrown" threat:

There is a spectrum of adversaries today arrayed against the United States. At the low end are individuals simply inspired to engage in terrorist attacks completely on their own.... But in other instances, terrorist groups either actively recruited individuals in the U.S., deliberately motivated others to carry out terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, or directed trained operatives in the execution of coordinated strikes against American targets within our borders. Al-Qaeda and its Pakistani, Somali, and Yemeni allies arguably have been able to accomplish the unthinkable—establishing at least an embryonic terrorist recruitment, radicalization, and operational infrastructure in the United States with effects both at home and abroad. And, by working through its local allies, the group has now allowed them to co-opt American citizens in the broader global al-Qaeda battlefield. (Bergen & Hoffman, 2010, p. 5)

This evidence supports the proposition by Jonathan Paris, that the three most significant concerns to U.S. authorities should be:

1. Converts to Islam who become extremist;
 2. Young American Muslims who travel abroad and meet AQ members or other extremists in Pakistan or the Middle East; and
 3. Radicalized Muslims who have been alienated by U.S. foreign policy.
- (Paris, 2007)

Why are these concerns “most significant”? Because they indicate that the violent Islamists have successfully influenced some American citizens to join the “global jihad,” despite diminishing support for al Qaeda around the globe (Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2008). These recent developments also indicate that surrendering the ideological battlefield by failing to engage in ideological conflict at home is a poor policy choice because “terrorism will continue to be a social problem, and civil society-level initiatives perhaps not previously considered in a serious way will ultimately warrant much greater consideration” (Horgan, 2006).

D. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST TERRORISM

The Bush administration issued the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism in 2003. Many, however suggest that this was not actually a strategy at all, but instead several disjointed ideas: “an approach to addressing a range of terrorist threats, a bureaucratic blueprint, a spending plan and a political statement” (Goure, 2004 p. 271). Succeeding plans by presidential administrations have likewise failed to take on the daunting political task of establishing a powerful central authority for the counterterrorism mission and have tended to look at the “battle of ideas” as an external conflict based principally on foreign-policy issues.

National Security Strategy 2010 calls for the nation to approach the counterterrorism mission as a whole-government challenge (Obama Administration, 2010, p.14), which reveals inherent challenges for the United States’ national security structure, and particularly the domestic counterterrorism effort: DHS (United States Department of Homeland Security [USDOH], 2008), NCTC (United States National Counterterrorism Center [USNCTC], 2010), and the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], 2010) still all have legitimate claims to primacy in “protecting the United States from terrorism.”

According to a recent strategic review, the United States faces a systemic challenge in that the “national security system is organized along functional lines (diplomatic, military, intelligence, law enforcement, etc.) with weak and cumbersome

integrating mechanisms across these functions.” (Locher, 2010.) None of these organizations incorporates domestic “counter-radicalization” into its mission statements. While these organizations do cooperate in preventing terrorist attacks, true collaboration and true prevention may be out of reach without a unified command and a holistic strategy.

Looking to the future, it is important to note that the 9/11 Commission Report took only the federal government under its lens. This was appropriate at the time, considering the federal government’s responsibility to provide for the nation’s common defense, as set forth in the Constitution of the United States, because terrorist acts by foreign powers are fundamentally acts of war. For these reasons and because of the disparate structures that support the counterterrorism mission at state and local levels, only the main components of the federal counterterrorism apparatus will be summarized here. It should be noted, however, that the structure necessary to execute a national strategy will necessarily include state and local authorities, nongovernment and community organizations. The maturing domestic component of the terrorist threat will likely result in fundamental changes to the way that counterterrorism operations are defined and how the homeland security community fights terrorism.

1. National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC)

The National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) was established in August 2004 and codified by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (Masse, 2005). NCTC was conceived and intended to address a key finding of the 9/11 Commission: “Breaking the older mold of national government organizations, this NCTC should be a center for joint operational planning and joint intelligence, staffed by personnel from the various agencies.” (Kean & Hamilton, 2004, p. 403). Reporting to both the president and the director of national intelligence (DNI), the NCTC is charged with a mission to “lead our nation’s effort to combat terrorism at home and abroad by analyzing the threat, sharing that information with our partners, and integrating all instruments of national power to ensure unity of effort.” Unfortunately, as a practical matter, NCTC is relegated to “suggesting” rather than “leading” the counterterrorism

effort because “neither the NCTC director nor the assistant to the president for homeland security and counterterrorism can direct departments and agencies, even on matters of CT programs and resources.” (Locher, 2010, p. 9) Nine years after 9/11, the need to consider both domestic radicalization and unity of effort raised concern for national leaders, who “expressed concern that no single U.S. agency is in charge of identifying and stopping the recruitment of U.S. citizens to carry out terrorist attacks” (Strohm, 2010) and “we have a lot of good people, a lot of good agencies [and] a lot of activity, but there still doesn’t seem to be an overall strategy nor accountability built in, nor a means of assessing the success” (Yager, 2010).

2. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Since its 2002, the federal government has provided homeland security grant funding to be used for preventive measures, including the establishment of intelligence fusion centers (USDHS, 2009, p. 22). Fusion centers are state-administered joint intelligence centers where state, local, and federal agents work in close proximity to receive, integrate, and analyze information into a system that can benefit homeland security and counterterrorism programs at all levels. Federal agencies play a supporting rather than a lead role. Fusion centers are not standardized and have produced varying results. According to a report by the Congressional Research Service (CRS), many of the centers identify “prevention of attacks” as a high priority, but little “true fusion” or analysis of disparate data sources, identification of intelligence gaps, or proactive collection of intelligence against those gaps, which could contribute to prevention, actually takes place (Rollins, 2008).

The “FBI’s role in and support of individual fusion centers varies depending on the level of functionality of the fusion center and the interaction between the particular center and the local FBI field office” (General Accountability Office, 2009). Many Fusion centers are not part of an integrated national or regional network at all, and some do not even have FBI representatives assigned. These conditions frustrate the flow of information to both the national level and state and local policy makers—those who deal with the public as part of their daily responsibilities and who are thus best positioned to

spot and address circumstances that foment radicalization. DHS components participate at minimal levels in fusion centers, and this involvement is sometimes of limited value, due to the lack of secure compartmented intelligence facility space and accreditation that would allow them to process classified information. Until Fusion centers and their personnel have access to classified information, their practical effectiveness in the counterterrorism mission is likewise limited. This may be a contributing reason for an additional finding by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) that many of the centers initially had purely counterterrorism goals but have increasingly gravitated toward an all-crime and even broader all-hazards approach.

3. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

The FBI, in contrast to DHS, is highly centralized and centrally managed by the Counterterrorism Division (CTD), which is physically integrated with the NCTC. CTD is singularly responsible for all FBI counterterrorism operations nationwide; it fulfills this responsibility through joint terrorism task forces (JTTF). This centralization was instituted by Director Robert Mueller in the immediate aftermath of September 11 due to the widely held finding that FBI analytic and information-sharing failures contributed directly to the success of the Al Qaeda attacks (Kean & Hamilton, 2004, p. 352). An immediate reaction to September 11, centralization was instituted to ensure control of operations and to increase information flow in an organization that had previously operated largely as 56 independent investigative agencies with limited information from other offices.

Expansion of the number of the FBI's joint terrorism task forces is, perhaps, the single most important accomplishment toward collaboration at federal and local levels. It also provides a tangible measure of increased communication. The FBI has expanded the number of JTTFs from 33 in 2001 to more than 100 today (Mueller, 2010); they serve as the recognized and designated environment in which "federal to local operational partnerships" take place to detect, investigate, and disrupt terrorist threats or pursue perpetrators (Mines, 2007). The JTTFs historically have been guided by a national strategy that served as a "high level road map" encompassing the FBI counterterrorism

division's mandate to "protect the United States from terrorist attack" (FBI, 2004). The FBI's supporting national strategy, however, administratively expired in 2009. Since that time and due to an increased number of threat-driven scenarios, the FBI's counterterrorism mission has become "reactive." The CTD and the JTTFs are forced to respond quickly to a variety of eminent threats outside the construct of a long-range plan or strategic vision.

JTTFs do not have authority or a formal mechanism to disseminate information beyond participants in the task force. In the event of an overseas terrorist attack, state and local participant agencies often seek information regarding ongoing developments or "spot reporting" that is perceived to be available to JTTFs. Often such information is not available, and in other cases the information may be in a classified format that requires limited distribution. This has been the basis of comments from the International Association of Chiefs of Police that "the full benefits of intelligence sharing have not yet been realized because the process itself remains a mystery to many police officers, and some law enforcement executives consider their agencies too small or too remote to participate in criminal intelligence sharing. These obstacles to full participation could result in alarming gaps in the intelligence that guides our homeland security and crime fighting efforts" (International Association of Chiefs of Police [IACP], 2008).

JTTFs collect information through a variety of means, including technical and human intelligence, but they enjoy only limited analytical capability for counterterrorism matters in support of local and regional issues or threats because intelligence collection priorities are generally related to foreign-focused national intelligence requirements, not societal factors that influence domestic radicalization. Local officials sometimes benefit from JTTF intelligence, but they rarely receive products that contribute to local policy decisions. This may be part of the reason that some SLT organizations do not readily appreciate the value of JTTF participation. A 2008 survey of the International Chiefs of Police reinforces this point: its members concluded that the national counterterrorism strategy was developed "without sufficiently seeking or incorporating the advice, expertise or consent of public safety officials" at the state, local, and tribal level (Leavell, 2007, p. 45).

The FBI has also established field intelligence groups (FIGs), consisting of FBI agents, linguists, surveillance specialists, and analysts at every field division (National Strategy for Information Sharing, 2002, p. 8). FIGs focus on cross-programmatic and all-source intelligence production and dissemination. According to FBI Director Mueller, FIGs have come to regularly share this intelligence with FBI partners in more than 18,000 law enforcement agencies around the country. They collaborate closely with international counterparts and recognize the imperative to be able to develop and disseminate information that will assist our partners (Mueller, 2008). Despite these accomplishments, it is not entirely clear that the FBI's homeland partners feel that they receive sufficient intelligence and analysis to enable effective homeland security operations (West & Bykowicz, 2010). For this reason, many state and some local agencies have created and come to rely on their own intelligence centers that are not fully integrated into either a federal or national counterterrorism mission. Uncoordinated intelligence activities sometimes result in operational compromise and limit potential intelligence collection and, ultimately, the prevention of future attacks (Dwyer, 2009).

E. CHALLENGES PRESENTED BY THE CURRENT STRUCTURE

The structure of the nation's counterterrorism effort confounds even the most dedicated efforts at a "whole government approach," not because of an unwillingness or due to technical challenges to sharing information but because there is no unity of command for the counterterrorism mission. While NCTC is responsible for "monitoring and assessing overall National Implementation Plan for the War on Terror (NIP) implementation, as well as the impact of subordinate CT plans and guidance" (Leiter, 2009), it is not clear that subordinate counterterrorism strategies matriculate from the NIP, and NCTC is not currently positioned to enforce its monitoring role.

Outside of Washington, the United States has two basic structures through which the counterterrorism mission is addressed: The DHS and the FBI function at both ends of the organizational spectrum. DHS lacks both interconnectivity with its fusion centers and direct authority over resources that are "owned" by state and local agencies. The department is charged with

assisting state, local and private sector entities in disrupting potential terrorist activity and denying terrorists access to the United States at our land, air and sea ports of entry, as well as travel networks into and within the country.... [However, despite DHS's role as] one of the Federal government's key counterterrorism agencies, beyond the Secretary and Deputy Secretary, DHS did not have a single coordinating entity for counterterrorism activities. (USDHS, 2010)

This may seem a confusing alignment of resources to mission—in fact the overlap of agency responsibilities and missions results in a fundamental challenge to effective and efficient prosecution of the homeland security mission (Bellavita, 2008). Instead of an integrated structure, the homeland security community has several separate structures that are not interlinked, a reflection of the amorphous nature of the current homeland security environment. Further complicating the homeland security challenge, until the publication of National Security Strategy 2010 in April 2010, the counterterrorism community faced the dynamic nature and complexity of terrorism threats with no overarching strategy, multiple definitions of the homeland security mission (Bellavita, 2008), and overlapping jurisdictions that can cause internecine rivalries, impede information sharing, and reduce efficiency. At the operational level, lack of clearly defined roles and missions creates confusion, provides no mechanism for resolution, and can result in missed opportunities to collect intelligence or exploit operational opportunities.

F. COUNTERTERRORISM POLICY AND THE DISRUPTION OF DEVELOPED THREATS

The basis for counterterrorism policy in the United States can be found in the United States legal code, where terrorism is defined as: “activities [that] (A) involve violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or of any State; (B) and appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping” (18 U.S.C. § 2331, 2010).

National Security Strategy 2010 acknowledges the growing threat of “homegrown” terrorism (Obama Administration, 2010, p.19) and is the first strategy to include homeland security as part of a broader national security effort (Tapper, 2010). This reflects an aspect of the 9/11 Commission report that had not previously been implemented in the homeland: “Prevent the continued growth of Islamist terrorism” (Kean & Hamilton, 2004). How NSS 2010 will be implemented, however, remains to be seen.

The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice play leading roles in preventing terrorism through law enforcement action and intelligence collection. Both remain in a degree of flux as they strive to address the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. The organizations share overlapping missions,⁷ and both agencies have devoted resources and personnel to expand existing or to create new organizational structures designed to increase communication and cooperation with state and local agencies in support of the counterterrorism mission. These efforts have had varying degrees of success.

John Brennan, the assistant to the president for homeland security and counterterrorism under President Barack Obama, recently assessed the current homeland security atmosphere, saying:

In the years since [the terrorist attacks of September 11], I have seen the significant progress made in safeguarding the American people—unprecedented coordination and information sharing between federal agencies and with state and local governments; improved security at our borders and ports of entry; disruption of terrorist recruitment and financing; and a degradation of al Qaeda’s ability to plan and execute attacks.” (Brennan & Flanagan, 2009)

⁷ The U.S. government struggled with how to best accommodate the desire for clear authority for the Department of Homeland Security. The Homeland Security Council was formed with this intent in mind (HSPD-1). When it was created, the Department of Homeland Security had three core components to its mission statement: “Prevent terrorist attacks within the United States; Reduce America’s vulnerability to terrorism; and minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur.” Likewise, the FBI’s mission is “to protect and defend the United States against terrorist and foreign intelligence threats, to uphold and enforce the criminal laws of the United States, and to provide leadership and criminal justice services to federal, state, municipal, and international agencies and partners.” These overlapping missions contribute to the confusion of responsibilities in domestic counterterrorism matters.

This commentary by a senior representative of a presidential administration (that, like most administrations, might be disinclined to compliment the accomplishments of its predecessor) speaks highly of the progress made by the homeland security community. It is widely accepted that the nation's security posture is improved relative to the status of homeland security prior to September 11. Why?

The sense that the homeland security community is moving in the correct direction is largely determined by evaluating critical mission areas. The Department of Homeland Security defines its strategic objectives:

- Prevent terrorist attacks within the United States;
- Reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism; and
- Minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur. (National Strategy for Homeland Security, 2002)

The FBI defines its strategic objectives for the counterterrorism mission:

- Prevent terrorist attacks against the United States and its interests;
- Deny terrorists and their supporters the capacity to plan, organize, and carry out logistical, operational, and support activities;
- Pursue appropriate sanctions against terrorists and their supporters;
- Provide incident response and investigative capability [investigation and intelligence]; and
- Identify and respond to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threats and fully coordinate the investigative response of the U.S. government to a WMD threat or attack. (FBI, 2004).

Employing the above criteria, the fact that no major terrorism acts have occurred in the United States since 2001 and that several terrorist groups have been disrupted during the same period may indicate that the mission has generally been addressed by the DHS and the FBI in a manner sufficient to counter existing threats. It may, however, also indicate that no sophisticated attacks have been attempted or that al Qaeda's strategy has changed to capitalize on American recruits with little training or experience—such

attacks are less expensive in terms of time, resources, and risk than pre-September 11 al Qaeda operations that were planned for years prior to the attack.

But, being informed is only part of the challenge. Devising and implementing a holistic counter-radicalization strategy would necessarily include more than just federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies: community leaders, corporate partners, and nongovernment agencies should be integrated into such strategies. The U.S. government has not broached this challenge in a serious way. NSS 2010 could mark a significant shift in domestic policy—certainly, the roles and activities of counterterrorism agencies may change with a new counter-radicalization mission that none has previously embraced.

It is important for the president and highest-level policy makers to consider a philosophical question: Does the United States face a greater threat from the few hundred al Qaeda members in the mountains of Pakistan and Afghanistan—and their affiliates, or from the threat of social polarization and the violence inspired by radical Islamist ideology? If, as NSS 2010 suggests, “We are at war with a specific network, al-Qa’ida, and its terrorist affiliates who support efforts to attack the United States, our allies, and partners” (Obama Administration, 2010, p.20) then a sustained “hunt and kill or capture” policy may suffice. This statement, however, seems to conflict with current depictions of the present state of the terrorist threat, as provided by certain officials. The director of the National Counterterrorism Center has stated, “Plots disrupted in [the domestic United States] during the past year were unrelated operationally, but are indicative of a collective subculture and a common cause that rallies independent extremists to want to attack the Homeland” (Leiter, 2010b). According to the director of the FBI, “threats from homegrown violent extremists ... who act without direction from a foreign terrorist organization—remain a concern” (Mueller, 2010). The secretary of DHS has stated, “It is clear that the threat of al Qaeda-style terrorism is not limited to the al-Qaeda core group, or organizations that have close operational links to al Qaeda” (Napolitano, 2010). After all, the formal, organized threat from bin Laden and core al Qaeda has been severely diminished by military force abroad and through law enforcement in the homeland (Leiter, 2010a).

Conversely, despite progress against core al Qaeda and affiliated groups, the Islamist narrative apparently remains intact and has penetrated American society. “Last year was a watershed in terrorist attacks and plots in the United States, with a record total of 11 jihadist attacks, jihadist-inspired plots, or efforts by Americans to travel overseas to obtain terrorist training” (Bergen & Hoffman, 2010). It appears that the battle of ideas⁸ promised by al Qaeda’s doctrine has proven its ideology more resilient than its core leadership.

Certainly the quantitative impact of American deaths caused by terrorism within the nation’s borders during 2010 does not compare to 2001, but the number of attacks has been multiplied tenfold. Today’s domestic threat from militant Islam is not the short-term impact of a dramatic physical assault, but the social and ideological impact of polarized identities that might divide the nation and directly affect our way of life if a cycle of religious and ethnic violence materializes. In addition to the prominence of Americans who have become leaders of al Qaeda and some of its affiliate organizations, al Qaeda engages in propaganda that undermines the status and credibility of the United States. American citizens with strong familial and ethnic ties in Pakistan, for instance, might be susceptible to efforts by Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, who claimed that America, via its influence with the government of Pakistan, actively prevented aid to flow to the victims of flooding in Pakistan (al-Zawahiri, 2010). Zawahiri’s statement, of course, is true in the sense that al Qaeda members are actively targeted by United States and Pakistani government forces. Zawahiri’s message, however, was not adequately countered, or better yet preempted, by broad messaging by the United States regarding efforts by the American military, Department of State, and nongovernment and charitable organizations that mobilized to deliver aid. Ideologically, this was an opportunity lost. Instead of messages regarding efforts to deliver aid to Muslims abroad, the Muslim-American public was inundated by media coverage of the “Ground Zero Mosque” and “burn the Koran Day.”

⁸ William Lind, the first to describe Fourth Generation Wars, articulated greatest concern for a form of warfare that combined terrorism, high technology, and the following additional elements: a nonnational or transnational base, such as an ideology or religion; a direct attack on the enemy's culture, and highly sophisticated psychological warfare, especially through manipulation of the media, particularly television news. (Lind, 1989, pp. 22–26). These are the American military experts referred to by Abu Ubeid below).

G. SUMMARY OF THE U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORT

Since September 11, agencies conducting the counterterrorism mission in the United States have developed strategies independent of a national architecture and have favored enforcement action over “soft power” tactics (Nye, 2004). Alternative strategies have been and are being applied by other Western governments with success. Chief among these nations are the United Kingdom—perhaps the country most experienced in combating insurgency and homegrown terrorism—and the Netherlands—one of the West’s most liberal nations. The United States should evaluate these alternative approaches to identify a framework that recognizes the common principles that mitigate the recruitment and radicalization of new terrorists. For the purposes of this thesis, a comparative policy analysis will be conducted to identify best practices that might be applied in the United States. Each counterterrorism strategy will be analyzed using four parameters:

1. Is the organizational structure of the counterterrorism effort aligned with the threat?
2. Does the strategy ensure unity of effort across government agencies to prevent the development of terrorist cells?
3. Does the strategy provide tools to shape the environment in which the ideological struggle is waged?
4. Is the population’s social identity impacted by the government in a way that is positive or negative for national security?

Answering these questions may define a strategy designed to impact not just the enemy but also to have a far-reaching social impact.

As suggested by NSS 2010, a whole government strategy can have profound implications for our national security and improve our way of life. Placed in an “eliminate-reduce-raise-create” grid (Kim, 2005):

<p><u>Eliminate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural ignorance - Religious justification of terrorism 	<p><u>Raise</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community trust Volunteered information from community Support for “mainstream” ideologies
<p><u>Reduce</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resonance of Islamist messaging - Credibility of radicalizers 	<p><u>Create</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment with threat Ability to identify and address grievances Multilevel problem-solving approach

Table 1. Eliminate-Reduce-Raise-Create Grid

III. THE EVOLUTION OF A COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The test we must set for ourselves is not to march alone but to march in such a way that others will wish to join us.

-Hubert Humphrey, U.S. Vice President, Senator

A. THE BASIS OF THE UK STRATEGY

1. The UK Experience with Homegrown Terrorism in Northern Ireland

While the history of the Irish-British conflict dates from the Norman Conquest of 1066 C.E., the scope of this analysis will relate to the conflict pursued by the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), commonly referred to as the “Troubles” that began in 1969. Before considering government action, it is first necessary to provide the context of the conflict and explore the nature of the PIRA.

The PIRA is an outgrowth of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) that fought an insurgency successfully challenging British rule in the whole of Ireland. The IRA conflict was essentially an asymmetrical military conflict that began with the Easter rebellion of 1916–1921. The British in turn, employed “tactics, including martial law, cordon and search operations;” the use of IRA prisoners as hostages on high-risk patrols; rigid media control; even firing squads. These tactics succeeded tactically but ultimately caused resentment from the Catholic population. The UK’s heavy-handed tactics diminished its popular support and the government’s credibility with a population that, from its perspective, had been repressed by the Crown for hundreds of years. The UK’s “retaliation policy” ultimately undermined popular support to the point that the UK was compelled to sign a treaty that partitioned Ireland into the Republic of Ireland, a predominately Catholic population that achieved self-rule, and a British province in the north where the majority population was Protestant (Geraghty, 1998, pp. 330–42). As a result of the partition, the six northernmost counties became what is now known as the Province of Northern Ireland (Gregory, 2010).

The “Irish victory” resonated in Irish social identity and served as a siren song for a hard-core element within the Irish “republican” movement that opposed the partition of Ireland, despite a majority of the population (loyalists) in the six counties of the north that chose to remain a part of the United Kingdom. IRA continued to seek unification of Ireland’s 32 counties into a single state—their preferred strategy to accomplish unification was to oust the local Ulster government and the British Army through the use of terrorism.

But conflict in Northern Ireland would not be driven solely by a small group of individuals seeking control of the whole of Ireland—there were other underlying factors resulting from the partition that also contributed to social unrest. Catholics in Ulster were subject to discrimination and maltreatment by the loyalist Protestant population. Legitimate social grievances created a context where Catholics progressed along a path toward political violence. These circumstances lay mostly below the surface until after World War II and the rise of civil protest that permeated Western society in the 1960s.

In 1968, Catholic perceptions of discrimination resulted in a campaign of mass civil rights protests that attracted international attention to the cause of the Irish Catholics. The government of Northern Ireland attempted to address some of the grievances but with little real impact; polarization of the society had already occurred, and it persisted. The police service of Northern Ireland, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) misread the motivation of civil rights protesters, thinking they were led by republicanism. The RUC assessed the civil disobedience as veiled separatism, when in fact the civil rights protests were simply that—protests regarding discrimination. The government of Northern Ireland conceded to some grievances of the “Catholic community living in poverty following decades of neglect... [Unfortunately,] these concessions sparked fears in Loyalist areas about the future of the link with Britain.” (Jane’s Provisional IRA, 2010). Catholic protest expanded in 1968 and 1969 and was met by a repressive Ulster government. The RUC responded to civil-rights marchers engaged in civil disobedience with violent crackdowns. After days of violent rioting, and with the RUC forces exhausted. “Britain deployed regular army troops to the province’s

streets, ostensibly to protect the Catholic minority” (Gregory, 2010). Unaddressed grievances and fears on both sides of the dispute would fuel violence from that time forward and mark the establishment of the PIRA.

Some former members of the IRA, and new recruits generated from the Ulster government’s response to civil rights protests, supported violence as a means to independence for all 32 counties of Ireland. This nucleus formed the PIRA and split from the republican movement, leaving behind the old “official” IRA, that was “more interested in exploring the political, socialist path than continuing with the armed struggle” (Alonso, 2001, p. 133).

The British army deployed to an unenviable position: directly in the middle of sectarian violence. Both sides of the Republican-loyalist conflict used terrorism and intimidation tactics, although the PIRA was far more active and potent with its terrorist attacks and a historical reference that framed the British army as an occupying force. Considering the level and nature of violence employed by both sides of the conflict, it is easy to understand the aggressive posture taken by the British army in its conduct of the mission. Two factors likely drove military actions: 1) the violence and intimidation perpetrated by the PIRA obligated the United Kingdom to provide security for its citizens and 2) due at least in part to its heavy-handed tactics, the RUC had been unable to develop an effective intelligence that might allow for a more refined approach. For these reasons, the British government retaliated against attacks and used coercive techniques to develop information about the terrorism group.

The 1973 Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act (EPA) established special criminal processes that included broad search and seizure authority, warrantless arrests, and detention without trial. The Prevention of Violence (Temporary Provisions) Act (PVA) expired in 1973 but was reintroduced following a spate of bombings in 1974 as the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act (PTA). Under these laws “preventative detention was allowed for 48 hours without a warrant, and an additional five days could be authorized by the Home Secretary (Donohoe, 2007, p. 20). Such

measures allowed the British to disrupt terrorist attacks, but mass arrests without charges adversely affected the relationship between the government and Catholic citizens of Northern Ireland.

The PIRA then embarked on a campaign of dramatic violence that it claimed targeted the British and Dublin governments but regularly resulted in civilian deaths. The two cases below represent a small sample of the 2,671 attacks committed by the PIRA and its affiliates between 1970 and 1998, as well as PIRA's obvious disregard for innocent life (Global Terrorism Database, 2010):

- On July 21, 1972, the IRA's Belfast Brigade planted 26 bombs in the city center without prior warning. Eleven people died, and more than 100 were injured. This attack became known as "Bloody Friday."
- On November 21, 1974, the IRA planted explosive devices in several pubs in Birmingham, on the British mainland. A total of 21 people were killed, and over 100 were injured. This expanded terrorist operations outside Northern Ireland and created a new paradigm for British security services.

a. Internal Review and Adjustments

By 1975, it became evident to the UK that a new strategy would be required for such a long conflict that had produced multiple generations who viewed the British government as an occupying power. The UK adopted elements of "hearts and minds" campaigns that had been successfully employed in counterinsurgencies in Malaya and Kenya to refine its approach to counter terrorist activity at home. The strategy combined forensic police investigation with massive surveillance of terrorist suspects. The new domestic counterterrorism strategy substituted massive physical, human, and electronic surveillance for physical separation (Geraghty, 1998, p.74). The UK also began to treat terrorism as a crime, rather than an act of war, and adopted an approach that had previously proven effective at denying the insurgents popular support in the British colonies.

With the PVA and PTA in effect, the UK continuously reviewed the application of counterterrorism strategies and corresponding laws to gauge efficacy and identify operational gaps and necessary changes. For instance, in 1983, laws were changed to address “exclusion” and the deportation of travelers to and within the UK (Walker, 1983, p. 489) as a way to preclude radicalizing influences and operational cells from entering England. The regular and objective review of policy revealed further gaps in the UK strategy, such as threats from external locals (i.e., Irish visiting England), and enabled the creation and enforcement of laws that diminished the PIRA’s ability to attack in England. The British excluded travelers to the UK who were associated with terrorists. These tactics aligned with the counterinsurgency concept of separating terrorists from the mass population in order to protect citizens and deny the terrorists opportunities to recruit or raise funds.

The “criminalization” of terrorism lent credibility to the UK government’s actions because of the transparent legal process and the government’s more restrained enforcement of laws intended to counter the persistent threat to civilians. From the perspective of those sympathetic to the PIRA, the UK continued its punitive and deterrent strategies that squelched the freedom to express opposition to ruling governments on either side of the partition in a constructive way. With Ireland politically divided and the Northern Irish economy tattered, root causes of the conflict and societal unrest were unable to be constructively communicated by the Catholics in Northern Ireland, much less addressed by the Ulster government, in a way that might increase the public’s trust and loyalty. Resistance to British rule remained high in some segments of the society. The terrorists clung to their vision of an Ireland united through violent ousting of the British and to claims made by their leadership cadre: “Armed struggle is a necessary and morally correct form of resistance in the six counties against a government whose presence is rejected by the vast majority of the Irish people (O’Brien, 1999, p. 116). But the narrative had been countered by British actions, and illusions of strong support for the PIRA proved false.

b. Government Influence Increased

Nevertheless, the PIRA's bombing campaign continued on its spiraling tangent of indiscriminate violence. Indiscriminate targeting - and the fact that the PIRA and its affiliates killed more Catholics than the British security services, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and Protestant terrorist groups combined—thus undermined the message it sought to communicate. With civilian death tolls increased, the IRA lost its moral appeal with the mass population and with it lost public support.

Contrastingly, the Crown gained credibility by demonstrating interest in resolving the conflict, and it increased investment in infrastructure and the economy. Shifting public sentiment brought with it enhanced cooperation from the public and the enhanced ability to elicit volunteered information from the public and recruitment of informants. It is now clear that “some very centrally placed republicans” were enlisted to that end (Dickson, 2009, p. 487), which in turn resulted in better intelligence.

The British adopted a holistic approach to address grievances that was meant to require contributions from both the Unionists and the Catholic minority's leadership. After three decades of violence, with all sides bloodied, Protestant, Catholic, and British government all longed for peace. In order to get what they wanted, the government and the population were compelled to work together to maximize mutual benefit. The British strategy to accomplish this was particularly important because, as some analysts contend, “the biggest problem [uniting Northern Ireland] was the lack of trust between the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Fein (Archick, 2008, p. 3).

The Irish population began to see two ideologies emerge. One offered hope for peaceful coexistence, a path to independence, and improved quality of life. The other promised continued violence and indiscriminate killing.

c. Impact

As support for violence diminished, the political branch of the PIRA, Sinn Fein, found influence, but British execution of the UK counterterrorism strategy had already gained traction:

PIRA support came from elements within Ireland's Catholic population.... At the peak of its campaign in the 1970s and 1980s the group enjoyed considerable support from these communities, and this was reflected in the fact that, following the end of the conflict, Sinn Féin became the largest party on the nationalist/republican side in the Northern Ireland Assembly following the March 2007 elections. However, while successful in appealing to sections of Northern Ireland's Catholic community, the party failed to make the breakthrough in Republic of Ireland politics that it had hoped for. In the 2007 general election, Sinn Féin was returned with only four of the 166 seats in the Dail (parliament). As such, despite the fact that PIRA purported to conduct its armed campaign in the name of the Irish people, the vast majority of people on the island of Ireland, north and south, voted for parties that rejected the violence of PIRA, an illegal organization in both jurisdictions. (Jane's Provisional IRA, 2010)

The PIRA splintered repeatedly as dissident factions who refused to reconcile left the group, but eventually the Good Friday peace agreement was signed on April 10, 1998. The agreement called for devolved government—the transfer of power from London to Belfast—with a Northern Ireland assembly and executive committee in which Unionist and nationalist parties would share power, as well as a commitment by PIRA to disarm.

Shortly after the Good Friday Agreements, on August 15, 1998,

29 people were killed by a car bomb planted in the packed town center of Omagh. The attack was claimed by the “Real IRA ... a non-reformist republicanism that finds its legitimization in ... the use of force as the main and uncompromising method to achieve [its] republican goals ... a “necessary form of resistance”, also provides them with the “right to murder in the name of Ireland.”

Omagh's atrocity was followed by Gerry Adams's first ... condemnation of an attack carried out by republican activists. In the last three decades the IRA had perpetrated similar actions, though none of them had ever been condemned by any of its leaders. (Alonso, 2001)

Though atrocities may still occasionally occur, the UK's principled and legal actions in the fight against terrorism contrast so sharply with the terrorists' portrayal of themselves as warriors fighting an occupying force that even Gerry Adams, a 30-year PIRA veteran and suspected member of the Provisional Army Council finally denounced republican violence. Adams, who had already emerged as a political leader of the PIRA

at the time of his statement, may have had ulterior motives for doing so—the Omagh attack may have been intended to undermine his power and authority within PIRA or may have been an attempt by a splinter faction to win influence with those who were convinced that continued violence was in their best interest. This in-group/out-group dynamic signaled that while the mass Catholic population had become “de-radicalized,” peaceful harmony in Northern Ireland might linger out of reach.

The UK government’s willingness to address legitimate grievances of the population proved beneficial, especially as tensions linger between Irish republicans and the majority Protestants in Northern Ireland. Soft power tactics allowed—or encouraged—a leader like Gerry Adams, the same IRA terrorist leader cited above, to engage in negotiations with the British government and the government in Ulster. Adams described why the new British policy was effective: “In the past I have defended the right of the IRA to engage in armed struggle... Now there is an alternative” (Time (Verbatim), 2005). Where the terrorists’ message had promised continuing violence, the UK instead offered hope and opportunity. Successful application of the UK strategy countered the terrorists’ ideological narrative, though it did not offer a panacea.

The troubles in Ireland continue at a subdued rate, with occasional spikes in activity from dissident republicans that cost lives—even today. Nevertheless, the government has met its principle goal for the threat posed by terrorism. The risk of Irish terrorism has been “reduced sufficiently so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence” (UK, Home Office, 2009).

2. UK Experience with Islamic Extremism

a. Current Threat

The UK faces a complex challenge when it comes to international terrorism. On one hand, it has been engaged in a conflict with one of the world’s most sophisticated and long-lasting terrorist organizations, the PIRA, and its offshoots since 1969. More recently, a threat from al Qaeda and like-minded Islamic terrorists reached British shores. With the March 2003 invasion of Iraq, the threat increased exponentially. As provided by the former head of MI5, the UK “involvement in Iraq radicalized a whole

generation of young people who saw [the UK's] role in Iraq and Afghanistan as an attack on Islam" (Hughes, 2010). The UK's close alignment with the United States changed Britain's status in the "global jihad" from support base to target.

The global jihadist threat emanates both from terrorists who are guided by core al Qaida leadership and self-radicalizing actors who are "autonomous and take their lead from radical propaganda shared via the internet and other channels." MI5 assesses that Islamic terrorists draw their inspiration from al Qaeda's global message: the West represents a threat to Islam; loyalty to religion and democratic institutions is impossible; and violence is the only proper response (MI5, 2010).

So why does the narrative appeal to British Muslims? To try and understand the context in the UK, it is useful to understand the context of Muslim-majority relations in spring-of-2001 Britain. During that period, "spasmodic rioting skipped between towns in the north of England, ... white and Asian youths fought each other and the police. In Bradford, cars were torched, businesses were firebombed and, on July 7th alone, 164 police officers were injured" (Economist, 2001).

The Islamist ideology may resonate with some British Muslims because many perceive themselves as a disadvantaged minority. In fact, this perception is supported by socioeconomic metrics: Muslims in the UK are the least likely of religious groups to own their own homes, least likely to hold professional jobs, and the most likely to be out of work (Economist, 2005). But socioeconomic motivations alone have not proven to be a key indicator for radicalization (Victoroff, 2005, p. 3–42).

Many of the UK's immigrant Muslims relocated to the UK from regions of conflict (particularly Kashmir) where tribal and clan affiliations had great influence on daily life and social norms. For instance, most women in Muslim countries do not work outside the home. In the UK, where the cost of living is very high and most women do work outside the home, the cultural proclivity for a wife to remain at home reduces the household income below the average. A similar pattern emerges when one considers that the average number of children born to Muslims in the Europe is three times that of non-Muslims (Taspınar, 2003).

Reasons for polarization can be complex. For instance, Gallup polling data of London Muslims indicated that they were “less likely than the general public to say they would prefer to live in a neighborhood made up mostly of people who share their religious or ethnic background (25% vs. 35%)” (Mogahed, 2007). But complicating this articulated desire, for many Muslim immigrants cultural tradition and economic conditions might call for multiple generations to live in the same home. The physical structure of housing configuration in the UK makes such arrangements difficult. The obvious alternative for children is to buy a home close to other family members. This course of action seems to resolve the cultural inclination, but to other British citizens in the neighborhood, it might appear that the immigrant population is buying up local properties with intent to form a political block. The failure of individuals to engage can cause social polarization because of such misunderstandings—similar to the circumstances of Catholic civil rights protests in Ireland in 1969. Understanding the relationship between demographic data and the “true” situation is crucial to a thorough understanding of social contexts.

British Muslims were also emotionally impacted by UK military actions against coreligionists and extended family abroad. For these reasons, some British Muslims suffered the predictable outcomes of these circumstances—cognitive dissonance and crisis of identity. The result has been increased domestic radicalization.

Regardless of the reasons behind the perception, much of Britain’s Muslim population felt alienated from the majority population in the UK due to their ethnicity and religious beliefs (Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2008). This circumstance is one that the British government must deal with effectively to prevent social polarization over the long term.

b. Strategic Assessment

Prior to September 11, 2001, the UK government focused on the “Troubles” and Irish terrorism. But by 2003, the UK recognized that the threat of Islamist ideology represented not just a threat from abroad but also from the British Muslim population that maintained familial and ideological links to Iraq, Afghanistan, and

Pakistan where the UK and its allies were engaged in military operations. Facing the prospect of internal political, religious, and ethnic conflict, the British government devised a “long-war” strategy for the new threat, a balanced approach that incorporates both hard and soft power: aggressive military action and policing to disrupt terrorist operations, paired with engagement strategies designed to stop the flow of new recruits and cut off support for terrorist organizations. The holistic strategy to counter terrorism was titled “CONTEST.”

The British security services have recognized that the “new terrorism” contrasts sharply with the Irish threat and that threats emanating from global Islamist ideology continue to evolve (Roseneau et al., 2007). Al Qaeda and other international terrorist networks are a very serious threat and likely to persist for a considerable time in the future. Where the Irish pursued a limited and defined political agenda, al Qaeda and similarly motivated groups are “global in origin, global in ambition and global in reach ... [with] an ambition to kill as many people as possible” (O’Neill, 2006).

In the spring of 2001, concerned with the obvious risk of escalating violence between races, an investigation was commissioned by the Home Office. Social conditions that contributed to the riots were apparent to Ted Cante, the man charged with assessing what the causes might be:

Whilst the physical segregation of housing estates and inner city areas came as no surprise, the team was particularly struck by the depth of polarisation of our towns and cities. The extent to which these physical divisions were compounded by so many other aspects of our daily lives, was very evident. Separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, means that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives. These lives often do not seem to touch at any point, let alone overlap and promote any meaningful interchanges. (Cante, 2001, p.9)

The underlying polarization of British society raised the possibility of continuing violence, in direct parallel to the polarization between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland thirty years before. The events of September 11, 2001, and the allied invasion of Iraq would contribute further to polarization—but it is important to

understand that the threat to the UK runs more deeply than a terrorist attack. Underlying social conditions were only exacerbated by UK support for American military campaigns. Thus, the UK set out to address the threat to its national security on multiple fronts with a new strategy.

B. CURRENT STRATEGY

In order to explain the UK's current strategy for countering terrorism, it is useful consider its definition of "terrorism." In 2000, the UK adopted a definition that clearly identifies both religion and ideology as potential components of a terrorist act. The UK defines terrorism as: "the use or threatened use of violence, designed to influence the government or an international governmental organization or to intimidate the public or a section of the public for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause" (UK Home Office, 2006). This definition sets the table for broad measures to address the roots of terrorism outside the sphere of political agendas; it opens the door to government inquiry into religion and ideology.

The CONTEST strategy is arranged into five components: 1) pursue: i.e., stopping terrorist attacks; 2) prevent: i.e., stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism; 3) protect: i.e., strengthening protection against attack; 4) prepare: i.e., mitigating the impact of attacks; and 5) counter proliferation (UK Home Office, 2009).

Of these five components, the Prevent strategy (Prevent) stands out. Only Prevent will be addressed here because it is an attempt to counter terrorist ideology domestically. As such, the Prevent strategy offers a potential long-term solution to a national security concern because it aims to counter the appeal of extremists' narratives locally, appeals that may vary from community to community and individual to individual. The Prevent strategy promotes a joint effort between government and community to decrease terrorism by acting along five main axes (Home Office, 2010):

1. Challenge violent extremist ideologies and support mainstream ideology;
2. Disrupt those who promote violent extremism and support the institutions that are victim to such voices;

3. Support individuals who are being or have been recruited to the cause of violent extremism;
4. Increase the resilience of communities to violent extremism; and
5. Address the grievances that ideologues are exploiting. (UK Home Office, 2010d)

Communities are expected to play an active role in countering radicalization by developing support functions that provide positive options to those who may be vulnerable to recruitment. Such individuals regularly come into contact with government officials (including but not limited to law enforcement), community workers, or religious figures.

1. Countering the Islamist Extremist Narrative

Disrupting the propagandists of al Qaeda and like-minded extremists is central to the Prevent strategy. UK laws allow for arrest and prosecution of radicalizers who would incite violence or provide justification for violent acts (Racial and Religious Hatred Act, 2006), but the application of executive action by law enforcement officials is coordinated by police with local authorities. In turn, local authorities can prepare to address the ideological vacuum that might result from law enforcement action. Thus, the Prevent strategy recognizes the importance of consultation and coordination between agencies prior to law enforcement action in order to affect the community in a positive or least damaging way.

Other alternatives also exist in this framework. In many instances, the government may be able to bring about intervention by the community at a point in the radicalization process that is prior to commission of a criminal act. Rather than enforce petty criminal offenses, local government authorities, including the police, community leaders, and intelligence services may instead choose to support community groups or leaders who are willing to intervene to disrupt the radicalization process through a variety of nonjudicial techniques. This manner of disrupting the radicalization process surrenders nothing from the government—charges can always be pursued at a time of the government’s choosing if deradicalization efforts don’t work. But such opportunities develop trust between

Prevent partners and offer the promise of future collaboration to address threats and diminish the risk of perpetuating the “state versus Islam” narrative.

Building trusting relationships with the community assists in understanding grievances; by addressing grievances positively, the government gains credibility with the public. Actions along this axis include creating safe venues for debate and a space to discuss extremism. These venues also allow for community leaders to challenge calls to violence.

The government, and particularly the police force, works directly with community leaders and activists to build strong community leadership and increase the community’s ability for “self help” in providing social services and positive alternatives for the community at large. In order to increase the capacity of communities to resist violent extremism, the police services adhere to community policing models, including civilian police community support officers (PCSOs) specifically designed to serve as a bridge between police and the public (UK Metropolitan Police , 2010). This strand of the Prevent strategy involves direct involvement with Muslim communities and their leaders through forums, town-hall meetings, research and focus groups, and educational services.

In one example, the Kent Constabulary developed the “Partners and Community Together” (PACT) program, where police work alongside elected, religious, and neighborhood leaders to address community needs, be they increased patrols or facilitating neighborhood clean-ups. The local police are dedicated to providing accessible and visible policing teams that respond to the needs of local communities (UK Kent Constabulary, 2010). This type of collaboration brings together members of the government and community who, working together, exert a positive influence on the environment that is much greater than the influence they might generate working on separate, parallel paths.

The Prevent program also supports nongovernment organizations and educators to build resiliency to violent extremism through a wide array of activities. The Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) program is aimed at exposing children to different cultures and to encouraging critical thought and shared identities as British citizens. CCE is

responsible for a range of programs that it develops in collaboration with local communities. The programs vary from efforts like Spirit of Hyndburn, a photography project that “encapsulates the diversity” of the township; Not in My Name, an interactive theatre project that “boldly and unreservedly explores issues around religious extremism and terrorism”; and London Tigers, a community-led sports and youth charity that aims to build leadership and provide a positive environment to explore religion and good citizenship (UK, 2010).

The “Channel” program, within the Prevent framework, is designed to provide “a mechanism for assessing and supporting people who may be targeted by violent extremists or drawn in to violent extremism” (UK Home Office, Channel, 2010e).

The program is administered by a local channel coordinator and includes the participation of a panel of representatives from government, nongovernment organizations, and community leaders who come together to discuss with great specificity individual cases of radicalization, and to develop local strategies to address the threat. In cases where an individual is believed to have begun the radicalization process, panel members devise a strategy suited to the particular individual. Actions necessarily vary by individual but can result in religious counseling from a perspective that does not condone terrorist violence in order to impact the subject on a theological framework, direct communication with family members of the subject, or in more serious instances, removing a child from foster care and resettling the child with other foster parents. This program has been controversial due to its focus on Safi orientations and concerns over privacy matters (Alarabiya.net, 2009).

The UK Prevent strategy has recently been expanded to include right-wing extremists as well as Muslims.

2. Organizational Structure

a. Home Office

The United Kingdom’s counterterrorism strategy emanates from the Home Office, which has overall responsibility for immigration and passports, drug policy, counterterrorism, and police (UK Home Office, 2010c). The UK enjoys the advantages of

a unified command under Home Office direction for the counterterrorism mission because each officer in the security apparatus can trace missions and guidance to a common source. Overarching policing policies and philosophy are set by the central government, which also controls strategy, training, and funding. This framework ensures a common sense of mission, a common language, and an intelligence-minded culture for the counterterrorism community.

b. Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT)

The Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) was established as part of the Home Office “to give strategic direction to the UK’s work to counter the threat from international terrorism.” The OSCT reports to both the secretary of the Home Office and the under secretary for security and counterterrorism. The OSCT is directly responsible for implementing and coordinating efforts across the “whole of government” in the implementation of the CONTEST strategy. The overarching responsibility of the OSCT ensures a broad-lens view of the terrorism challenge. This multidimensional perspective informs recommendations for legislation, guidance, and funding to set a “strategic government” response. OSCT ensures that the counterterrorism effort is addressed through collective effort (UK National Archives, 2010a).

c. Research, Information and Communications Unit (RICU)

The Research, Information and Communications Unit (RICU) of the OSCT was created in 2007, to ensure consistent counterterrorism “messaging” across all levels of government. Like the OSCT, RICU is responsible to key leaders within the Home Office, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government. CONTEST communications strategies are developed by RICU, which assists local governments to communicate more effectively regarding CONTEST. The UK’s Home office is attuned to “short-term opportunities and developing longer-term communications projects, to weaken terrorist ideologies and strengthen credible alternatives to them.” Informed by a broad and deep understanding of the complex systems that result in terrorism, RICU plays an invaluable role in the “battle of ideas.” The UK staffs RICU with experts from a spectrum of fields, including

intelligence officers, anthropologists, and educators. These “academic practitioners” conduct research and analysis to ensure that decision makers across government speak with consistency regarding policy matters and government actions (UK National Archives, 2010b).

d. Government Offices

This is not to say, however, that all counterterrorism operations are strictly directed from London. Instead, government offices (GOs) form multiagency regional resilience forums that are convened in each English region to coordinate wide-area planning and to act as a bridge between central government and the local response (UK Home Office, 2006). Each regional GO is encouraged to develop strategies to address threats in the local context because the UK recognizes the dynamics that fuel terrorist threats vary in different parts of the country, and it appreciates that tactics employed in one region may not work in another. GOs also coordinate “best practices” within and between regions (UK Communities and Local Government Committee, 2008).

Joint-service counter-radicalization efforts like those described above, are coordinated at regional and local levels through GOs, which have the capacity to provide “full-service” responses to local grievances and have been fully integrated into the UK’s counterterrorism strategy. This allows the GOs:

- To foster partnership of police and citizens to involve the whole community in strategies to promote greater public safety;
- To take a problem-solving approach to identify and effectively address the underlying conditions that give rise to crime and disorder;
- To transform the government to respond to community needs more effectively;
- To enhance the understanding of interdisciplinary capabilities between government agencies.

The UK model demonstrates that joint-agency coordination at regional and local levels can ensure that national strategies are resourced and prioritized correctly where it counts—in regular interaction with the public. In turn, GOs ensure that the

central government is informed regarding the intricacies of the region. When information from various GOs is consolidated, a national threat picture can be developed with sufficient specificity to materially affect strategic planning.

A further advantage of joint service is that some government officers, including selected MI5 personnel, are required to serve three-year tours outside central headquarters. This facilitates the transmission of fresh ideas back to London and a better understanding of interdisciplinary capabilities for developing leaders. Rotation of managers outside of headquarters also provides central headquarters with an improved understanding of localized dynamics (UK Security Service, 2010).

C. CRITICISM OF THE STRATEGY

The Prevent program has been subject to mixed reviews by Muslims and the Parliament. Some Muslims fear discrimination: “There is the perception that the government is sponsoring Muslim organizations on the basis of theological criteria – — for example holding Sufis to be intrinsically more moderate than Salafis” (UK Communities and Local Government Committee, 2010).

From the British point of view, a focus on Salafists⁹ makes sense in an intelligence-led policing (ILP)¹⁰ model because

the UK National Intelligence Model emphasizes that crime is not randomly distributed, with the corollary that identification of hotspots of criminal activity is a worthwhile pursuit. It recognizes the importance of working with partnerships to achieve crime prevention, and finally that there should be a spotlight on targeting the criminal and not a focus on the crime. (Ratcliffe, 2003)

⁹ For the purpose of this thesis, the term “global Salafi jihadist” refers to an adherent to an ultraconservative form of Islam that subverts the ideology of peaceful fundamentalist Muslim groups to promote a peaceful message and repudiate terrorist violence.

¹⁰ According to Ratcliffe, “The aim of intelligence-led policing can be interpreted from the tactical tasking priorities of the UK National Intelligence Model, as disseminated by the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS). The four elements concentrate on: targeting offenders (especially the targeting of active criminals through overt and covert means); the management of crime and disorder hotspots; the investigation of linked series of crimes and incidents; and the application of preventative measures, including working with local partnerships to reduce crime and disorder.”

In accordance with this policy, the UK has focused its efforts on the ideological group it perceives to be particularly vulnerable to recruitment by the likes of al Qaeda.

The effectiveness of the UK's ILP strategy will depend on its implementation and balance of hard and soft power. According to Marc Sageman's testimony before the 9/11 Commission, bin Laden and like minded extremists adhere to a "global Salafi jihadist" ideology that is an ultra-conservative form of Islam, which subverts the ideology of "peaceful fundamentalist Muslim groups ... [that might] ... promote a peaceful message and repudiate terrorist violence" (Sageman, 2003). Therefore, the mass population—a recruiting pool for both terrorists and the government—is central to the UK strategy. The challenge for the British government is to disrupt and discredit the Islamist message without alienating the mass population or focusing so many resources on the Salafi community that it alienates other underprivileged minorities.

Civil libertarians and free-speech advocates have also voiced opposition to the Prevent program:

The atmosphere promoted by Prevent is one in which to make radical criticism of the government is to risk losing funding and face isolation as an 'extremist.'... Depoliticizing young people and restricting radical dissent is actually counterproductive. (Kundnani, 2009)

The British have also been criticized for engaging principally with moderates within the Muslim community. Nick Chatrath, of Oxford's faculty of Oriental Studies, for instance, opined in a critique of the Muslim Council of Britain's effectiveness in the radicalization effort that

in the face of growing radicalisation in Britain, Muslim leaders are ignoring extremists' points of view and glossing over some of the more unsavoury parts of Islam's ancient texts... This attitude must change, as the best way to extinguish extremist arguments is to deal with them out in the open, not just sweep them under the carpet and hope for the best. (Gledhill, 2010)

But despite challenges and some opposition, it appears that many in the Muslim world understand the intent of the Prevent strategy, even in Saudi Arabia, where one might expect much opposition:

If ... the policy is applied sensitively and Muslims are supported in their disgust at terrorism, rather than challenged over their loyalty to the UK, then [the Prevent strategy] may be a useful contribution to combating the men of violence (Arab News, 2010).

D. ASSESSMENT OF THE STRATEGY'S IMPACT

It is difficult to conclusively evaluate the impact of the UK strategy. The current threat assessment for the UK remains heightened, at the “severe” level, which means an attack is officially considered “very likely” (UK Home Office, 2010c). Review of the Prevent strategy is subject to mixed results, and it may be premature to make a definitive call as to the strategy’s effectiveness. It can be logically inferred from the “Troubles” that domestic tranquility is, realistically, a long way off and that the British government is truly in a battle to win the “hearts and minds” of a rising generation. Through Prevent, the government is correctly aligned to this goal.

Anecdotally, there is evidence of increased cooperation in some arenas. For example, Andrew Ibrahim, a Muslim convert, was reported to a police community relations officer when he discussed suicide bombing. According to the senior investigating officer, “He [Ibrahim] was unknown to us, the first thing we knew about his device was from the Muslim community. All of Bristol should be grateful to them for providing information. Without a doubt they saved people from serious injury and worse” (Gardham, 2009). This is exactly the end that Prevent aims to achieve—an alert community that is willing to cooperate with government authorities.

Polling data, too, indicates positive movement toward coexistence. British Muslims rejected moral justification for attacks on civilian targets at a slightly higher rate (3%) than in 2006–2007 polling. (Muslim West Facts, 2009). While the rate of condemnation changed very little, it is important to note that those able to morally justify a violent attack on a civilian target fell from two percent to less than one-half percent. It would appear that Prevent is, at least, positively influencing the most radical of British Muslims. Prevent appears to be on the right track.

IV. THE EVOLUTION OF COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY IN THE NETHERLANDS

A. THE BASIS OF DUTCH STRATEGY

1. The Dutch Experience with Homegrown Terrorism

The Netherlands suffered dramatic acts of terrorism during the 1970s from Malaccan nationalists—exiles, and the children of exiles, who lived in the Netherlands but maintained close affinity and historical roots in the Moluccas Islands, part of the colonial Dutch East Indies. These Malaccans formed a government in exile that was determined to regain control of their homeland and sought Dutch support for their cause.

Dutch Malaccans first migrated to the Netherlands when the Dutch government was obligated to demobilize 4,000 troops of the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (KNIL) and their families, who led the fight against Indonesian independence from 1945–49. This first wave of Dutch Malaccans was treated poorly by the Dutch government and never fully integrated into Dutch society (Yaeger, 1990). Both the Dutch government and native Malaccans expected the former KNIL soldiers and their families to quickly return to the Moluccas. That resulted in heavy barriers to integration imposed by the government on the former KNIL soldiers who once comprised the social elite of their native islands (Frenkiel, 2001). Exiles were discouraged from work, “forced to idleness, isolated in their camps [many were housed in WWII concentration camps], robbed of their military status, confronted another climate, [and struggled to learn the Dutch language]” (Rule, 1989).

In effect, the Dutch Malaccan population lived in isolation from Dutch society until it became clear at the end of the decade that their residence in the Netherlands would be permanent (Janse, 2005, pp. 59–60), at which time conditions began to gradually improve. Still, resentment regarding their treatment, relative shifts in social status, and perceived betrayal of their loyalty to the Netherlands ran deep in the community of exiles (Brouwer, 2010).

The Dutch-Malaccan community was incensed by its perception of unfair treatment by the Netherlands. Through Malaccan eyes, the Dutch applied inconsistent foreign policy that on one hand supported independence for Suriname but on the other hand denied support for Malacca's independent rule. (Both states were part of the Dutch colonial empire until 1949). When second-generation Dutch-Malaccans came of age, they closely identified with the cause of their parents, possibly because of the alienation they and their parents had experienced in the Netherlands. They had no basis for affinity to the Netherlands. Based on these underlying circumstances, it is possible to understand why second and third generations of Dutch Malaccans clung to the nationalist cause of independence, rather than embrace the Dutch culture into which they were born (Naerssen, 2007). The result of the Dutch-Malaccans' identification with their families abroad, paired with local isolation and legitimate local grievances, was manifested in eight dramatic terrorist attacks or attempts over the next eight years, including an attempted assassination of the royal family, hijackings, murder, and mass hostage taking of schoolchildren (Global Terrorism Database, 2010). With the exception of the final attack in 1978 (a train hijacking), terrorist attacks garnered broad support for the act from the Dutch-Malaccan community.

The short-term response to violent acts by the Dutch-Malaccans was aggressive and repressive. In the aftermath of the first dramatic Dutch-Malaccan attack, the 1970 hostage-taking at the Indonesian ambassador's residence in Wassenaar, in which a police officer was killed, the Prime Minister of Justice "ordered a major raid on the Moluccas' camp, Ijsseloord, as a show of force and to arrest suspected extremists. One thousand soldiers and special police forces, backed up with helicopters and tanks entered the camp, hermetically sealed it and patrolled in armored vehicles" (Rassner, 2005). This extremist action likely caused more resentment and anger from the mass population, a point validated by the disrupted attempt by 13 Dutch-Malaccans to kidnap Queen Juliana only four months later (Time Magazine, 1975).

a. Internal Review and Adjustments

Considering the very personal nature of such an attempt on the nation's royal family and the continuing vitriol from the Dutch-Malaccan community, it might have been understandable for the Dutch government to pursue a retaliatory program, create new laws, or reorganize to deal explicitly with the obvious "Malaccan problem." Instead, the Dutch government addressed the hostage-taking and murders in accordance with established criminal laws and sought to understand and address the underlying circumstances that had resulted in the terrorist acts.

Rather than enhancing sentences for political crimes, and creating new laws to address violent political acts, the Dutch court recognized the legitimacy of some Malaccan grievances. The court concluded that the government ought to reflect on Dutch obligations toward the people of the South Moluccas over the past 20 years; it suggested that the Dutch government engage in dialogue with the Dutch-Malaccan community (Janse, 2005, p. 62). With these considerations in mind, the court assigned only one year in prison to each of the hostage-takers (Rassner, 2005). This very public demonstration of Dutch intent to understand and subsequently to address the causes of terrorism would serve as a foundation for a new aspect of the Netherlands' approach to counterterrorism. Application of soft power would serve as a vehicle for the government to regain credibility with the the Malaccan population. The strategy would continue to evolve, and continuing assessments by the government would contribute to future, more efficient and refined applications of military and police action against hostage-takers.

As suggested above, the Dutch appear to have taken a long-term strategic position with the intent to prevent future terroristic acts. They were willing to consider Malaccan concerns in its domestic policies, despite attacks from radical elements of the community. This was an important and politically risky venture for the Dutch, since the Mallacan terrorists were by far the most damaging of terrorist groups to Dutch society;

the public verged on severe polarization in reaction to the attacks.¹¹ The government faced the challenge of the general public's demand for aggressive tactics to confront violent acts of terrorism that targeted not only government officials and edifices, but also schoolchildren and mass transit.

Without hesitating to use force to address violent acts, the government focused tactically on the crimes of violence and simultaneously adhered to a long-term strategy aimed at addressing the messages that those acts communicated. To stop the flow of new generations of terrorists, the Dutch believed it necessary to address social factors that contributed to the radicalization process. They sought to understand and address the social and cultural grievances of the Malaccan nationalists. The Dutch government demonstrated its willingness to consider the social impact of its policies and their long-term implications for domestic security, without compromising established foreign policy.

The government's recognition of the need for engagement did not translate immediately to effective programs, however. Despite recognition of the need to change as early as 1971, successful implementation of strategies to counter the homegrown threat was delayed for more than half a decade because of the "tensions between the various governmental offices" (Janse, 2005). This challenge would have to be overcome in order to fully implement a strategy that included both hard and soft power.

b. Government Influence Increased

In 1976, a panel of Dutch Malaccans was established to advise the government on social and cultural conditions of that population. One of the more progressive developments was the formation of "a triad of government agencies, nongovernment organizations and advocacy groups" (Rassner, 2005) that cooperated on improving relations. These efforts not only ensured dialogue between the Dutch

¹¹ The Provisional Irish Republican Army was more lethal in the Netherlands than Malaccan terrorists during the 1980s but the terror instilled by the Malaccans was more damaging to the social fabric of the Netherlands. The PIRA targeted British nationals with surgical precision (principally British government officials, including the British ambassador), whereas Dutch Malaccans tended to attack "soft" targets like transit systems and schoolchildren.

government and the Dutch-Malaccan community, they also provided a platform to air concerns and to create projects that required mutual contributions—for instance, the construction of a Malaccan Historical Museum to educate the public on the experiences of Dutch-Malaccans.

c. Impact

As in the British experience with the IRA, results of the soft-power approach were not immediate. In some quarters of the Dutch-Malaccan community, cultural and familial ties run deep, and some still feel passionately about the chance for independence of the Moluccas Islands. The impact of the soft-power strategy is evident, though. The last terrorist attack by Dutch-Malaccans was in 1978, and the violent nationalists' passionate ideology no longer resonates broadly. As the current president of the exiled Malaccan government in the Netherlands recently pointed out, "We're living in different times now. We believe that to achieve our aim—the establishment of an independent state—we don't need to use violence. It's better to choose a path of dialogue, lobbying and all that. That way, we'll actually achieve more" (Brouwer, 2010).

2. Dutch Experience with Islamic Extremism

a. Current Threat

As in the UK, the Netherlands recognizes a multidimensional threat to national security: radical Islam—"jihadists" in Dutch terminology—as well as both internal and external threats from radicalization. Like the UK—and for that matter, much of the West—the threat posed by Islamist ideology is considered to be dissimilar to previous experiences with terrorism. "The complexity of [the threat] prompts us to give up our usual perceptions and to translate the new approach into policy measures" (Netherlands, NCTb, 2004, p. 6).

Indications of radicalization in Dutch society became evident shortly after the September 11 attacks in Washington and New York, when two Dutch citizens of

Moroccan descent were killed by the Indian army in Kashmir. Soon thereafter, Dutch authorities publicly acknowledged that a network of Islamic militants were recruiting Dutch citizens for jihad (Simons, 2002).

According to the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism's (NCTb), Deputy National Coordinator for Counterterrorism, at this time in the Netherlands, "there was a tendency to downplay the problem... Even if Dutch Muslims were being recruited for the jihad, they were choosing to seek martyrdom elsewhere.... The risk that these young radicals could bring jihad to Western Europe, even to the Netherlands was conceivable but thought at the time to be minimal" (Ongering, 2007). The good news for the Netherlands was that radical Islamists were recruiting for foreign battlegrounds in places like Kashmir, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, that paradigm would soon change as well.

Europe was attacked by al Qaeda's exploded multiple bombs on Madrid's rail system on March 11, 2004. In April of the same year, the Minister of Justice conducted a review of the Netherlands' counterterrorism apparatus. The findings of this research resulted in the creation of the office of the NCTb, which soon faced the first lethal case of homegrown Islamist terrorism in the Netherlands, the internationally publicized murder of Theo van Gogh on November 2, 2004. The domestic intelligence service was thus commissioned to assess counterterrorism strategies employed by other Western nations in order to determine the best way forward for the Dutch government. The Dutch would draw from not just their own experiences with Malaccan nationalists but also from best practices of other nations to formulate policies moving forward.

b. Strategic Assessment

The Netherlands does not have a formal counterterrorism doctrine. Instead a compilation of policy papers and letters that define its efforts to combat terrorism reveal an approach that is based on previous experience with homegrown and international terrorism, as well as scholarly review of the policies and approaches of other governments (Netherlands, Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, 2009). Dutch counterterrorism strategy is clear, even if not codified:

Firstly, to strengthen the ties within Dutch society, especially by groups open to radical ideas. Secondly, to empower society, i.e. increase its defenses, so that individuals as well as communities may oppose the extremism that affects them or tries to recruit them. Thirdly, to intervene actively through the creative use of existing judicial and administrative measures—both by central and municipal governments—and through the development of a limited number of new measures. These include making the glorification of violence a criminal offence and measures against terrorist statements and sowing hatred on the Internet. (Netherlands Ministry of Justice, 2005)

The NCTb observed in 2005 that the jihadist threat was “inextricably linked with international developments ... such as the deployment of Dutch [military] units in Afghanistan and the growing international interest in interethnic relationships in the Netherlands” (Netherlands, National anti-terrorism coordinator, 2005). But the Dutch analysis went well beyond the obvious physical threat to national security (attacks on critical infrastructure, assassination, mass killing, or threats thereof) in its assessment. The Netherlands considered the implications of an ideological struggle and the threat that radical Islam poses to Dutch society—the threat to the codified and more ephemeral “vertical relationships” between government and its citizens, as well “horizontal relationships” between citizens or groups of citizens. The Dutch view it as a constitutional obligation to protect its society against any who would seek to undermine its “democratic legal order” with violence.

Democratic legal order is compromised when (undefined) amounts of social trust, social cohesion, solidarity, active citizenship and loyalty do not meet adequate levels.¹² (Netherlands, NCTb, 2004, p. 6). With this concept in mind, the Netherlands, considered to be one of the more liberal nations in Europe, perceived that the nation might be affected by a social chasm between ultraconservative Muslims and the rest of the Dutch population. To the Dutch government, societal cohesiveness is a fundamental national security concern, and the ability to maintain democratic legal order is of the utmost importance to the nation.

¹² For a detailed discussion of the concept of “democratic legal order and its role in the assessment of the Islamist threat to the Netherlands, see “From Dawa to Jihad,” p. 6–16 (Netherlands, NCTb 2004).

The strategic implications of the General Intelligence and Security Service's (AIVD) assessments led to changes in structure, policy, new laws, and more specific terminology that lay the framework for the new "broad approach" to counterterrorism. The Dutch define terrorism as "threatening, making preparations for or perpetrating, for ideological reasons, acts of serious violence directed at people or other acts intended to cause property damage that could spark social change, creating a climate of fear among the general public, or influencing political decision-making" (Netherlands, NCTb, 2010c).

When Dutch counterterrorism communications and actions are considered in sum, it is apparent that the Netherlands executes a balanced strategy that employs both hard and soft power.

B. CURRENT STRATEGY

1. Countering the Narrative

The NCTb considers terrorism "the ultimate consequence of a development starting with radicalization processes. ... Combating terrorism starts with combating the radicalization processes" (Netherlands, NCTb, 2004, p.6). In turn, radicalization is the preferred intervention point for the Netherlands to address the threat—better to prevent terrorism on the front end than to risk physical threats and interethnic and interreligious conflict. To that end, the government believes that it must act against radicalism under two conditions:

- 1) When such radicalism directly results in violence or other criminal activity;
- 2) When a form of radicalism that rejects the democratic rule of law gathers a large following. (Netherlands, Ministry of Justice, 2005)

With a clear preference for early intervention that denies a platform to radicalizers, the Netherlands developed new laws that enhanced state powers toward this goal. The European Union agreed on a strategy framework to combat terrorism and established a universal baseline response for member states (European Union, 2004). The common strategy framework is based on four pillars: "Prevent, Protect, Pursue and

Respond” (European Union, 2005).¹³ For instance, it is now a crime to recruit on behalf a designated terrorist organization. But “most EU-wide results have been obtained in the ‘Protect’ strand, where the European Commission is a leading actor, and in ‘Pursue’, where the member states’ vital interests are at stake and close cross-border cooperation is vital. Less progress has been recorded in ‘Prevent’ and ‘Respond” (Coolsaet, 2010, p. 865). Along the “prevent” pillar, the Dutch have far exceeded EU baseline performance.

The Netherlands also enhanced its own state powers via the Dutch Act on the Extension of the Scope for Investigation and Prosecution of Terrorist Crimes (ESIPTC). The purpose of the act was “to enable the police and the public prosecution service to initiate criminal proceedings as early as possible in order to prevent terrorist attacks from taking place” (Poot et al., 2008. Some of the provisions of this act were dramatic and indicate how seriously the Netherlands considers the threat of radicalization. The ESIPTC act made it possible for an individual suspected of being involved in a terrorist crime to be arrested without meeting the legal threshold of “probable cause,” and it delayed the moment at which the suspect of a terrorist crime will be allowed to inspect all court documents; this time limit can be postponed for a longer period, since the maximum pretrial detention period can continue for an extra two years.

Another significant change in policy came in the form of the Aliens Act (Netherlands, NCTb, 2010a). The Aliens Act allows for expedited removal of aliens who are judged by the AIVD to be a threat to national security or “public order.” The Aliens Act also allows for “a recommendation to refuse entry, cancellation of a residence permit, removal from the Netherlands, declaring a person to be an undesirable alien, placing them on an alert list and refusing to grant Dutch nationality (or its withdrawal if it has already been granted). The measures enable the national security apparatus to physically separate radicalizers from the potential recruiting pool. Removal actions are expedited, which means radicalizers are simply removed from the country. Streamlining this

¹³ The EU counterterrorism strategy builds on preliminary steps that are articulated in the Council Framework Decision of June 13, 2002, on combating terrorism. This decision neatly captures specific steps agreed to by European Council member nations to combat terrorism. Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2002:164:0003:0007:EN:PDF>.

procedure dampens the radicalizer or terrorist supporter's ability to inflame his followers' sentiments and mitigates the potential for the radicalizer to gain public sympathy.

The above measures reflect a continuing willingness to apply hard power to address the counter-radicalization mission, but soft power is employed extensively. The Netherlands posits that recruitment by Islamist terrorists "demonstrates the fact that the fight against Islamist terrorism does not only require great effort on the part of intelligence and security services, police and judicial authorities, but also permanent alertness in other policy areas, like immigration and aliens policy and integration" (Akerboom, 2003). This holistic, broad-based approach means that the Netherlands is faced with the challenge of finding the right balance between confronting extremism and fostering diversity.

The NCTb policy calls for municipalities to work directly with communities to develop localized strategies. In example, Amsterdam supplements the efforts of the NCTb by

- Focusing on the long-term sustainability of the inclusive, pluralist society in which Islam has an accepted place;
- Building resilience among and with the Muslim communities so that an alternative can be provided to radical ideologies through specific prevention; and
- Investing in formal and informal networks that can report early warning signals as well as intervene as early as possible in individual cases of actual radicalization. (Mellis, 2007)

2. Organizational Structure

a. NCTb

The NCTb reports to both the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Internal Affairs and Kingdom Relations and sits at the apex of counterterrorism operations for the country, managing components of approximately 20 agencies. In this capacity, the NCTb was designed to address critical needs through the following means:

- A single joint strategic conceptual policy framework, agreed to on an international basis and to be used to determine priorities in policy and action;
- A single central institution to organize the required higher level of collaboration, leadership, and perseverance, like a spider with its web;
- The collation, assessment and use of information collected by third parties;
- An administrative and statutory structure, appropriate to the gravity of the situation, setting out the requisite powers in connection with counterterrorism. (Donner & Remkes, 2004)

The practical implications of these needs are that NCTb is responsible for:

- Analysis of intelligence and other information;
- Policy development;
- Coordination of anti-terrorist measures.

By coordinating these tasks at a central point, agencies work less often at cross purposes and function in support of a strategy designed by the national government, rather than an internal strategy that may overlap the role or mission of another. The single strategic coordination point increases the effectiveness of the government's efforts to combat terrorism and ensures efforts to counter terrorism are conducted in concert with one another. At the same time, none of the component agencies holds counterterrorism as its principal reason for existence: terrorism is but one of many matters that each of these agencies addresses. For this reason, a coordination point was deemed essential to the Dutch Counterterrorism effort (Netherlands. Ministers of Justice and Internal Affairs & Kingdom Relations, 2004).

b. Regional/Municipal Boards

At a regional level, the General Intelligence and Security Service of the Netherlands (AIVD), a civilian intelligence service responsible for national security threats, works with the Dutch national police from 25 regional service offices. These regional police forces are governed by regional police boards consisting of mayors and a

chief public prosecutor (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe [OSCE], 2009). The regional police boards maintain both vertical communications through the parallel “national police” and AIVD reports and analysis, as well as through regional partners. The result is a networked structure that allows for an

up-to-date picture ... within the municipal authority of the situation as regards integration and radicalisation. Indications of any threat that young men or others (girls or women) might be likely to turn against society or towards radicalism might first be noted by employees of the local authority, or by Muslim communities, the police, schools, social services ... housing corporations or community centres and clubs. (Donner, 2004)

Thus, AIVD can identify, advise, and mobilize regional and local leadership to independently reduce the risk of terrorism (Netherlands. Algemeen Inlichtingen-en Veiligheidsdienst [Netherlands, AIVD], 2009).

With only about 80 personnel, the NCTb serves as a strong strategic guide for the AIVD and the police who, on the basis of the Intelligence and Security Services Act 2002, play the largest governmental roles in the counterterrorism mission (Akerboom, 2003). In this way, police boards can enjoy the benefit of intelligence at a national level as provided by the NCTb and at the regional and local level by AIVD and the police, and they are further informed by community contacts through both law enforcement and nongovernment entities. This affords the opportunity to reduce radicalization through a variety of means, not just enforcement action.

The direct engagement of local political leaders in this process ensures that the government is positioned and accountable for engagement with the public and that the leadership of the regional counterterrorism effort is attuned to factors that may influence radicalization. The regional structure supports an “intelligence mindset” of the police and a culture of alertness to local indicators that could signify radicalization. At the same time, the collaborative evaluation ensures the critical evaluation of intelligence and information reports. This capability is essential because behaviors that are alarming in one location may be normal in another context.

3. Counter Radicalization and Deradicalization

The willingness to engage with potential recruits to violent extremism, paired with a regionalized structure and a detailed understanding of local influences has resulted in a very progressive and nuanced approach to counter radicalization in the Netherlands. In fact, since 2006, “the focus of official counterterrorism efforts fell increasingly on deradicalization, with ‘repressive’ counterterrorism taking a back seat” (Demant & De Graaf, 2010, p. 418). Amsterdam, the largest city in its municipal region, pursues counter-radicalization at the individual level (Demant et al., 2008, p. 177). This process is developed, informed, and executed by “an intricate web of ministries, governmental agencies, local authorities, social services, educational facilities, think tanks, religious institutions and freelance consultants (Vindino, 2008, p. 12). The central government provides a large part of the funding, training, and overarching strategy for the counter-radicalization effort. Local authorities, through the components described above, coordinate and execute local strategies to support the larger picture. These strategies are mostly based on the Amsterdam model that defines the radicalization processes and a model for deradicalization, created by Colin Mellis, the Amsterdam municipal government’s policy advisor for counterterrorism. Mellis described radicalization this way:

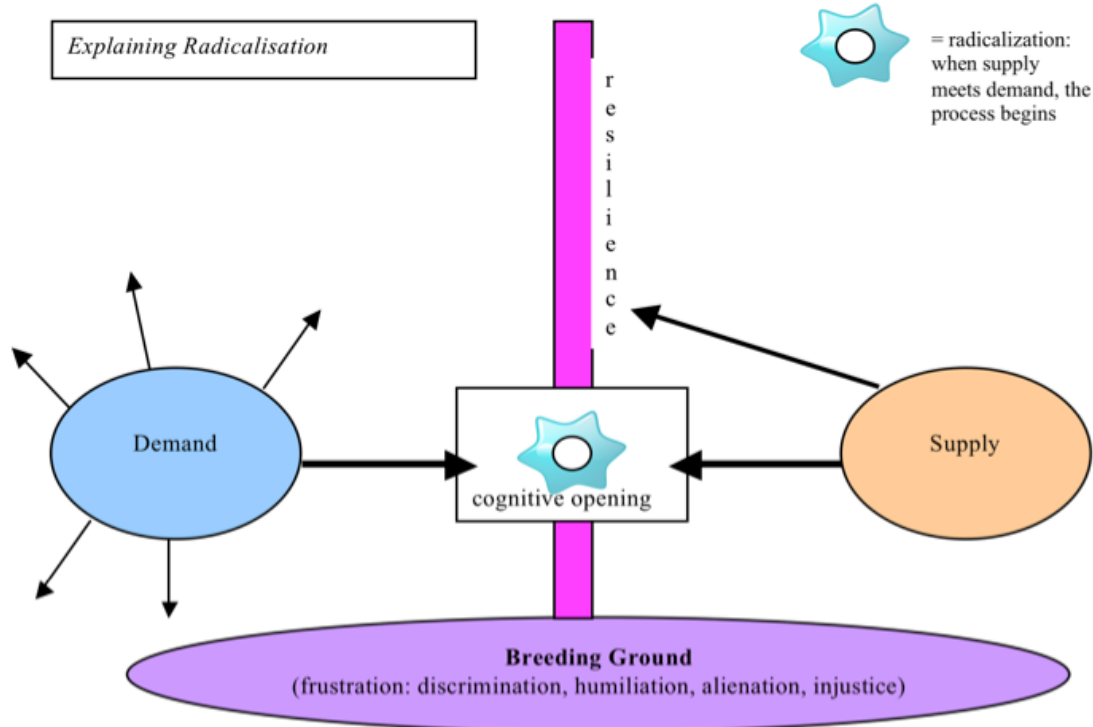


Figure 1. Explaining Radicalization

Demand: Mellis asserts that demand is increasing in the Netherlands, particularly from young generations who experience a crisis of identity. These individuals are embroiled in psychological conflicts between “Westernization” and “Muslim” identities. Conflicted individuals may seek to expand their knowledge of Islam.

Supply: Radical ideologies that encourage violent extremism are abundant on the Internet, through traveling imams and radical individuals that the potential recruit might encounter in daily life. Suppliers of the “global jihadi” narrative actively seek to influence the recruiting pool to adopt in-group/out-group perspectives.

Breeding ground: The breeding ground consists of the societal context that is experienced by the individual. According to Mellis, the breeding ground frustrations for Muslim-Americans might include experiences of discrimination, the depravity and immorality they perceive in Western culture, or social injustice that conflict with the

individual Muslim's belief system. As a Muslim living in the West, some (and particularly young "seekers") may withdraw from the mainstream and become less resilient to extremism. This vulnerability is particularly evident when the potential recruit experiences a personal crisis or "cognitive opening" that "shakes the certainty of previously held beliefs and renders individuals receptive to alternative perspectives (Mellis, 2007, p. 42).

C. THE TWO-PRONGED APPROACH TO DE-RADICALIZATION

Mellis proposes a two-pronged approach to combat radicalization. First, and broadly speaking, the Amsterdam model is aimed at societal influences on the individual. This is essentially a "policy aimed at individuals, and not the radical movement as a whole. The decline of a radical movement is influenced indirectly, by 'stealing away' members" (Demant & De Graaf, 2010, p. 420). Embracing the recommendations from a study by the University of Amsterdam's Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES) (European Union, 2008, p. 28) , the Amsterdam municipality has taken steps to:

- 1) Increase societal trust;
- 2) Increase political confidence;
- 3) Increase religious defensibility;
- 4) Find ways of contacting radical youngsters; and
- 5) Provide assistance to mosques in countering radicalization

Outreach efforts are intended to support the "binding" of an individual to social networks that engage in and support democratic society. When individuals are assessed to be at risk of radicalization, the government apparatus makes sure to support those in the individual's life who counter the West versus Islam narrative.

The Dutch recognize that "tackling polarization and radicalization is primarily a matter for local governments" (Mellis, 2007, p. 43), but there is also a clear delineation between counter-radicalization and counter-radicalization efforts—the individual's behaviors dictate which organization is the lead: "A distinction has been made between

‘thinking’ and ‘acting’. The moment there are indications of preparatory action(s) ... the case becomes the responsibility of the police” (Mellis, 2007, p. 43–45).

Amsterdam’s counter-radicalization model, as a conceptual framework, assigns responsibilities to the community (social network), religious leaders, and the government:

- Those involved in the lives of at-risk youth increase resilience in at risk-youth by nurturing confidence in an “inclusive democratic narrative and emphasizing potential and empowerment” despite obstacles;
- Religious communities are actively encouraged and supported by the government to provide diverse and active alternative ideologies; and
- Interconnected, formal, and informal networks positively address circumstances that result in frustration and anger. (Mellis, 2007, p. 43–44)

Providing yet more specificity, Mellis describes how de-radicalization is tailored to individual cases with a separate model that has been adopted throughout the Netherlands. When individuals observe changes in an associate and decide to report the “signal,” the reporter seeks assistance from the Information House—a non-law enforcement collaborative body that works through dedicated case management teams (CMT) to analyze and assess the circumstances around the person at risk of radicalization.

The CMT then draws from an established network of counter-radicalization partners to change the context of the at-risk subject. Early in the process, this may mean that the CMT identifies and facilitates employment or educational opportunities or positive group activity that exposes the at-risk person to broader world views and alternative perspectives that counter Islamist narratives.

When the at-risk person has progressed further in the process, CMTs may instead call on religious experts—also within the trusted network—to attempt “ideological intervention.” Depending on how much the at-risk individual has internalized the violent extremist narrative, key figures may be introduced with varying knowledge bases. In moderate cases, “key figures ... will need some knowledge of Islamic theology and democratic society, but those intervening later in the later stages of radicalization will

need to be theological experts of some stature.... The real challenge [of the CMT] is finding these figures and forging lasting alliances with them” (Mellis, 2007, p. 47).

The Case Process:

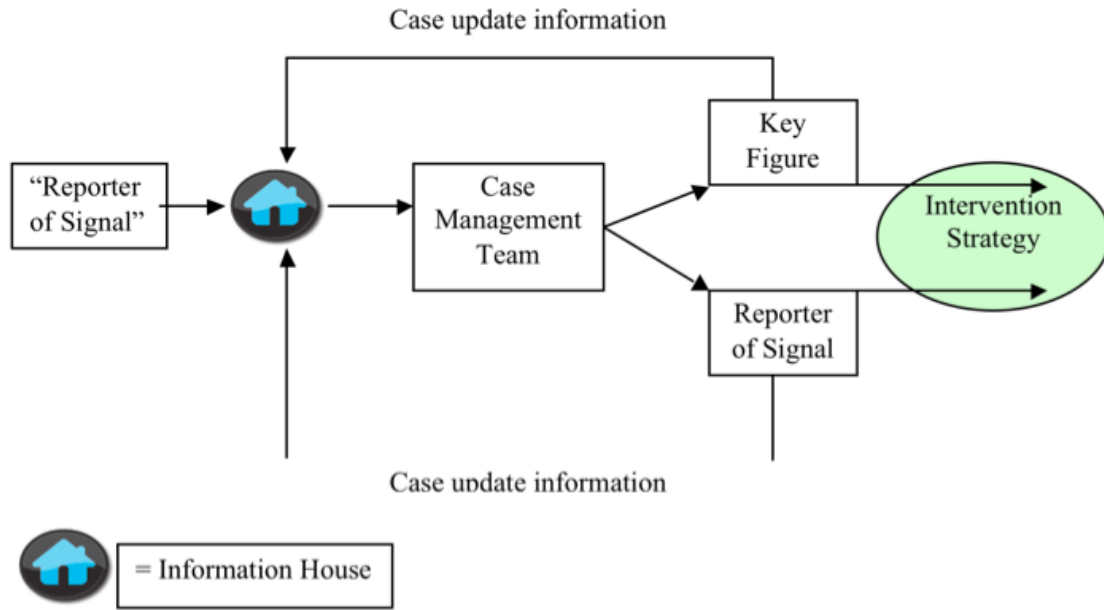


Figure 2. The Case Process

Trusting relationships between government, nongovernment, and religious partners in the counter-radicalization network are therefore crucial to successful intervention strategies because to be most effective these strategies should be applied as early as possible in the radicalization process. Low levels of trust between network members can delay or forestall the decision to report concerning behavior at any stage of the deradicalization process.

D. ASSESSMENT OF THE STRATEGY’S IMPACT

Based on its continuing assessment of the threat situation, the Netherlands reduced its national “threat level” in December 2009 to a condition that recognized the possibility of a terrorist attack but considers an attack unlikely. The assessment was based

on a diminished threat from core al Qaeda, which is largely on the defensive due to international pressure in places like Pakistan and Afghanistan. More relevant to the domestic policy discussed above, the Dutch posit that their policies have resulted in increased resilience of the Dutch Muslim population to violent Salafi ideology specifically because such groups lack coherent leadership, an impact that can be directly related to Dutch counterterrorism strategy. Further, and perhaps more importantly,

Terrorist attacks in the Netherlands have been able to be prevented, thanks to the efforts of the intelligence and security services, the police ... and many other services and organizations, but also as a result of the vigilance of ordinary citizens. Important in this context was society's growing resilience, especially that of the Muslim communities, against radicalization. All of the above means that the group of radicals in our country, who are prepared to further their political or religious goals by means of violence, has steadily decreased in size, and more has become known about the operation and modus operandi of this group. (Netherlands, NCTb, 2009)

Based on Dutch experiences with counter- and deradicalization efforts in the case of both Malaccans and Islamist terrorists, it appears that “not only government interventions, but also the discourse that is produced or reinforced through these interventions, have profound effect on the processes of de-radicalization [because] combating terrorism is itself a form of communication, just as terrorism itself is” (Demant & De Graaf, 2010).

It may also be that the flexibility inherent in the Dutch approach provides both “repressive” tools to deal with the “doers” and a curative approach for “thinkers” that demonstrates government credibility and inclusiveness to the broader population (Vindino, 2008, p.12). What is undeniable is that the balanced-power strategy provides more tools to deal with radicalization in a way that can be tailored to local contexts—and that the Dutch model has been effective.

V. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE UK AND DUTCH EXPERIENCES

If everything is well considered, it will not be difficult for a wise prince to keep the minds of his citizens steadfast from first to last, when he does not fail to support and defend them.

-Niccolo Machiavelli

The evolution of British and Dutch counterterrorism policies provides useful insight as to how Western liberal democracies might best develop strategies of their own. The UK and the Netherlands have achieved unity of command for the counterterrorism mission; adopted flexible, learning, and networked structures; enhanced quality intelligence for decision makers; and separated radicalizing influences from the mass population. Elements of British and Dutch strategies should therefore be explored for common themes that might inform the counter-radicalization strategy and policies in the United States. Set against the four parameters identified for analysis, it becomes apparent that the British and Dutch governments have reached similar conclusions and changed both strategy and structure to balance hard and soft power:

A. IS THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORT ALIGNED WITH THE THREAT?

1. Defining the Threat

British and Dutch governments recognize that extremist Islamist ideology is an existential threat¹⁴ to national security. Both nations consider that “new terrorism” spawns from Islamism (or “political Islam”), a worldview that places Islam “at the centre of an individual’s identity, as either the overriding or the only source of that identity... [and] essentially divides the world into two distinct spheres: ‘Muslims’ and ‘the rest’ ”

¹⁴ Kapitan (2008) describes the clearest form of “existential threat, a threat to a community’s very existence,” as “an attempted extermination of a community or nation that warrants a community’s recourse to self-defense.” He adds that the “even where extermination is not at issue, an aggressor might try to destroy a community in other ways, say, by enslavement or forced conversions of its members, destruction of its vital institutions (economic, agricultural, political, and cultural), appropriation of its natural resources, and seizure of its territory.” Both British and Dutch government definitions of terrorism seem to take such threats into account in regard to national identity.

(Maher & Frampton, 2009, p. 18). It is understood that the social changes that al Qaeda and similarly aligned Islamists aim to impose would fundamentally alter democratic government because of Islamist interpretation of the Koran. Both the UK and the Netherlands believe that the propagation of these forms of ideology, for instance through the glorification of martyrdom and the establishment of Islamic courts that function in parallel to the state's authority, constitute an ideological attack on their pluralist societies.

Encouraging violence (or actually engaging in violence) to obtain political or religious goals poses an inherent threat to the state and its citizens. At the other end of the threat spectrum, Islamists who pursue a "Dawa" strategy seek to continuously influence the mass population toward

extreme puritanical, intolerant and anti-Western ideas. They want Muslims in the West to reject Western values and standards, propagating extreme isolation from Western society and often intolerance towards other groups in society. (Netherlands, NCTb, 2004, p. 7)

Unlike rabbinical courts in the UK that address civil matters, many Islamic courts in Muslim countries receive severe criticism decrying the unequal treatment of women and inhumane punishments. Thus the suggestion to accommodate Islamic religious jurisprudence in the UK and the Netherlands evokes a strong emotional response from many elements of society: "The Archbishop of Canterbury, was pilloried for suggesting that the establishment of sharia in the future 'seems unavoidable' in Britain" (Taher, 2008). In recognition of the rights of association and freedom of religion, the UK and the Netherlands have adopted a long-term strategy that is intended to attract Muslim citizens to their forms of democratic rule and integrate Muslim citizens into "mainstream" society. Both the UK and the Netherlands allow moderate forms of sharia as a mechanism for mediation in some civil matters (Feldman, 2008; Netherlands. Research and Documentation Centre, 2010).

2. Two-Pronged Approaches to Countering Radicalization

Islamist terrorism is particularly threatening to liberal Western democracies because al Qaeda and its associated groups employ tactics intended to kill as many people as possible and a long-term strategy to change society in a way that conforms with their

passionately held religious beliefs. These are much broader aims than either PIRA or Malaccan terrorists. The Dutch and British recognize that the physical threat of terrorism is intended to “advance a ... religious or ideological cause” or “spark social change.” For this reason, they approach terrorism along two coordinated fronts. Terrorist plots are confronted aggressively by strong law enforcement powers and underlying social problems that require a “whole government” response.

Both governments developed components of their strategy that 1) impede the spread of Islamist messages, and 2) support those who actively counter this narrative.

While methods of propagating Islamist ideologies are not always criminal in nature, British and Dutch approaches to counter terrorism recognize the long-term danger of polarization within their societies. As a result, these governments take active steps to address grievances of minority groups and promote an “inclusive” national identity that can provide security over the long haul.

3. Criticality of Second and Third Generations

The concept that “understanding the enemy” enhances a government’s ability to successfully defeat it is perhaps as old as military philosophy. In the cases of Malaccan and Irish terrorism, the Dutch and Ulster governments had policies or social structures that impeded integration and assimilation. In the case of Dutch-Malaccans, the refugee population was physically isolated from the rest of Dutch society and discouraged from integration because it was expected that the entire population would be repatriated to its native islands. The Irish Catholic population was similarly barred from the democratic political process by gerrymandering of political boundaries by the Protestant majority and discriminatory policies of local governments. When British troops deployed to restore security in Ireland, the military forces were perceived by Catholics to act on the side of the loyalist Protestants. It is notable that those second and third generations of the mass population (immigrants, in the case of Dutch Malaccans and Irish Catholics living under Protestant rule) constituted the “radicalized” populations.

In terms of the current threat posed by Islamist ideologies, we again see that many second and third generations of Muslim immigrants feel socially isolated in Britain and

the Netherlands. Social polarization resulted in large and violent demonstrations against the government well before catalyzing incidents like U.S. military strikes in Afghanistan and, especially, the U.S. invasion of Iraq inflamed Muslim sentiment. Whereas most of the world understood the compelling argument to deny al Qaeda a safe haven in Afghanistan, the U.S. invasion of Iraq seemed to corroborate the Islamist narrative of a Western world bent on destroying Islam. In nations like the UK and the Netherlands, where second and third generations of Muslim immigrants already felt isolated and repressed, the “West versus Islam” narrative resonated profoundly. Because immigrant populations failed to integrate into broader society (or because nations failed to welcome immigrants to the mainstream), immigrant populations held strong affinity for their cultural, religious, and familial roots. Second and third generations identified more closely with those identities than with the culture into which they were born. Such cognitive dissonance provides an opening for radicalization and recruitment by Islamists.

B. DOES THE STRATEGY ENSURE “UNITY OF EFFORT” ACROSS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO PREVENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF TERRORIST CELLS?

The United Kingdom and the Netherlands developed holistic counter-radicalization strategies that align directly with the ideological threat. Current British and Dutch strategies evolved from the nations’ experience with homegrown separatist and ethno-nationalist terrorist groups—terrorism motivated by limited goals that allow for the possibility of negotiation. Both countries recognize that “new terrorism” presents a challenge that requires counter-radicalization strategies that have impact across many factors. These factors combine in a complex way to lead communities toward or away from radicalization and require a multidimensional approach. In effect, the OSCT and the NCTb address terrorism as a “system” of complex and interconnected factors. Therefore, a single entity within the government serves as a coordination point for a broad array of activities.

1. A Strong National Coordination Element Is Essential

The role of the UK's Home Office is neatly summarized in a single sentence at the top of its web page, "The Home Office is responsible for keeping the UK safe from the threat posed by terrorism." (UK Home Office, 2010b). The NCTb is assigned two tasks: to "minimize the risk and fear of terrorist attacks in the Netherlands and to take prior measures to limit the potential impact of terrorist acts" (Netherlands. NCTb, 2010b). The Home Office and the NCTb guide counterterrorism operations across the whole government. This allows the OSCT and NCTb to tailor solutions based on regional needs. The OSCT and the NCTb can quickly adjust enforcement, support, and messaging strategies in ways that are responsive to local, regional, and national requirements. No department of the British or Dutch governments devotes all or even most of its resources to counterterrorism, therefore each department has only a limited interest in the counterterrorism mission. The Home Office's OSCT and the NCTb allow for certain elements or activities within larger government departments to focus exclusively on counterterrorism. The centralized, national counterterrorism component reduces interagency competition and conflicting intra-agency mission priorities because operational control of dedicated resources lies within the authority of the OSCT and the NCTb.

2. Whole Government Strategies

Beyond the ever present need for traditional human intelligence, the government's ability to understand all source intelligence in the context of local community needs and grievances is critical. This contextualization has direct bearing on the effectiveness of government action to address those concerns and may increase development of collaborative relationships. Used constructively, good intelligence can make government more effective and efficient. Regional hubs for government counterterrorism efforts increase the continuity and translation of national objectives to local government. Likewise, regional hubs secure the ability of local government and communities to "send up the chain" messages that may inform the national government of the effect of its policies on domestic security matters.

3. Regional and Local Implementation Strategies

To counter the terrorists' narrative, the British and Dutch governments actively target and counter ideologies that support violent action to achieve political or religious aims, and they encourage mainstream citizens to do the same. This involves debate, coordinated messaging, and government agencies that have sufficient authority to take action that is both strong and empathetic to community concerns. To be effective, government personnel must be strategically placed, have a detailed understanding of local dynamics and be informed by a unified strategy—these requirements cannot be easily met by a centralized authority. Local contexts may differ from national conditions, which are necessarily less refined. Strategies can be devised at the national level, but they are always implemented locally.

Through joint service centers like GOs and local police boards, the UK and the Netherlands empower all levels of government to act within the bonds of national strategy while providing “full-service” to communities. A joint, networked structure enables counterterrorism practitioners to improve their overall capacity to reduce radicalization and increase security (Scheider, Chapman, & Seelman, 2003). When local governments work with the community to diminish radicalization, the social status of community members is enhanced for partners who confront influences considered negative by the local community.

C. DOES THE STRATEGY PROVIDE TOOLS TO SHAPE THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE IS WAGED?

1. The Government Cannot “Go It Alone”

Both British and Dutch security services recognized nongovernment agencies and community leaders as important parts of their counter-radicalization strategies. It is exceptionally difficult to disrupt the radicalization process once an individual has committed to Islamist ideology. Credible voices are required to intervene with a religiously motivated recruit to terrorism. It is more likely that a radicalized subject

would respond positively to someone who can speak with religious authority and shares a common background than with a government agent who represents the “evil” that the subject might be radicalized against.

Positive relationships with community leaders should result in media coverage that establishes a “mainstream” interpretation of Islam that rejects violence to obtain political goals. Indications of support from the community abound anecdotally, (Musaji, 2010), although Muslim rejection of terrorism rarely receives national media coverage. A communications strategy that incorporates coordinated messaging between government and Muslim partners might ensure increased media coverage of positive news stories.

The UK’s Prevent strategy calls directly on community leaders to actively counter the Islamist narrative. British programs support a variety of initiatives that are intended to assimilate Muslim youth into British culture. Likewise other government-supported programs provide platforms for communities to explore diverse cultures and perspectives. This may tend to diminish religious and cultural isolation, which in turn may reduce the likelihood of prejudice and isolation on a societal level.

2. Building Trust with the Community

Community policing programs introduce the opportunity for community groups to work with government officials to achieve “superordinate goals” (Abrams et al., 2001, p. 64–70), with tangible results that are desirable by both groups. Superordinate goals tend to build cohesion and cooperation between groups, which could benefit the community with enhanced responsiveness to grievances and the government with increased cooperation and security. Positive relationships with community leaders should be pursued because government-community partnerships can result in three main benefits:

- Information about community reactions and perceptions may identify emerging trends;
- The feeling of consultation and partnership gives minorities the assurance that the government targets terrorists, not ethnicities or religions. It might also enlist community leaders in individual and collective efforts to counter terrorist narratives; and

- Trusting relationships would reassure the community that the police will aggressively respond to threats against the community. (Paris, 2007)

3. Domain Awareness

In order to shape the ideological battlefield, the government must have or develop a strong intelligence base, consisting of technical, liaison, and human collectors. Poor intelligence leads give military and police forces little alternative but the use of coercive power to ensure the security of the civilian population from terrorists. As the British experience at the beginning of the Troubles demonstrated, when coercive power was used too broadly, or in a way that could be perceived to be discriminatory, it alienated the very hearts and minds that the government needed to attract. The mass Catholic population became more isolated, and moral support for the terrorists increased. In the early years of the Troubles, heavy-handed policing led to more violence. Similarly, in the Netherlands, cordon and search operations against Mallaccan villages produced an attempt at violent retort.

4. Applying Hard Power Alone Can Increase Radicalization

The threat of an imminent terrorist attack warrants an aggressive tactical response to save lives and deny terrorists an opportunity to bring attention to their cause. Effective and efficient application of overwhelming force may serve to instill a sense of futility related to violent tactics. Most importantly, rapid responses are necessary to save lives, particularly in hostage situations or in order to disrupt terrorist operations. These points are well established and particularly important when facing an enemy that is bent on killing as many people as possible and that intends to die as part of what it views as a “martyrdom” operation. Such responses to tactical threats are appropriate.

However, British experience with Catholic civil-rights protests in Northern Ireland and military-supported fugitive searches of Dutch-Malaccan villages taught the UK and the Netherlands that use of force that is perceived to be discriminatory or disproportional to the threat can fuel “in group/out-group” resentment. In-group/out

group polarization can fuel further polarization and isolation and thus may increase radicalization and diminish the mass population's trust of government.

5. Separate Terrorists and Radicalizers from the Population

The separation of mainstream community from extremist messages need not be literal. By supporting voices in the community who oppose violence and denounce terrorism, the government can diminish the credibility of the global jihadist's message. Both the British and Dutch create safe platforms for public discussion and accept criticism, making changes to policy where appropriate and feasible. Wholesale change may be particularly difficult in matters of foreign policy where local officials, and even locally based federal officials, have limited impact on national strategies. Nevertheless, these platforms for dialogue provide a mechanism for grievances to be consolidated and voiced as regional concerns, which likely carries more influence than those presented by individual citizens or special interest groups. By creating a political path for nonviolent Islamists, the UK and the Netherlands provide a legitimate alternative to violent expression.

When separation strategies are applied literally by arresting or deporting radicalizers, the intent of such action should be to remove the individual(s) from society as quickly as possible and for an extended period (in the case of criminal proceedings) or permanently (deportation), thus inhibiting the radicalizer's ability to communicate his violent ideology to the public.

Fast-tracking judicial action would also obligate the government to make public any criminal charges against the radicalizer. Criminal activity is a violation of the state's trust by the visa holder and might undermine the visiting radicalizer's moral authority. Public platforms, as described above, allow a venue for the government to describe the reasons for its actions in an environment that promotes objective evaluation. Public debate might be enhanced by follow-on discussions via an interconnected and expanded network of contacts that do not involve the government but can understand and articulate the government's perspective.

Under the current, multiyear process for removal and deportation, the government is precluded from commenting publicly on the details of a case for fear of prejudicing the jury pool. If speedy trial and process were implemented, the amount of time a subject can portray himself as a martyr would diminish, thus removing a cancer from society in its early stages. The government should broadly distribute information that is available to the public through its informal networks. By making the facts of the case known through a liaison platform and making counter-radicalization partners aware of press releases and where to find public indictments, much of the rumor of conspiracy can be mitigated.

On a less formal basis, both government officials and local counter-radicalization partners should aggressively inform associates potentially affected by the arrest or removal about the nature of the charges. Ideally, a strong counter-radicalization network might distribute such information informally, by interpersonal contact and social media, and more quickly and effectively than mainstream media.

D. IS THE POPULATION’S SOCIAL IDENTITY IMPACTED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN A WAY THAT IS POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY?

1. “Whole Government” Efforts Should Be Designed to Support Counter-Narrative Messages

The British ultimately won the “hearts and minds” of the mass population by providing Catholics, even some who were engaged in the terrorist campaign, a venue for dialogue where grievances could be openly discussed. Similarly, the Netherlands opened dialogue with Malaccan leaders even while violence persisted. The British and Dutch governments communicated simultaneously complete intolerance for violent extremism and a vision of peaceful coexistence. This message resonated with the population at large because so many had been affected by violence during 30 years of conflict. This strategic position shift by the UK provided a sharp contrast to the PIRA. Similarly, when the Dutch government opened communication channels with Malaccan separatists, who had increasingly used indiscriminate violence, many in the Malaccan community recognized that with little support for self-rule from those residing in the Molacca Islands, the

government in exile had no realistic chance to attain its goal. Terrorist actions thus became self-limiting because of their diminished ability to recruit new terrorists.

2. Long-Term Strategies Include Priority for Integration to Larger Society

Prosecuting a “battle of ideas” requires an overarching vision of the end result. The PIRA and Malaccan separatists were able to clearly articulate their long-term goals: a united and independent Ireland and an independent Malaccan state supported by the Netherlands, respectively. These ideas probably appealed to their core audiences—Irish Catholics who were subject to discrimination in Northern Ireland and Malaccan refugees living in the Netherlands—because the mass population viewed itself as a disadvantaged “out group” of the larger society and believed that actualization of the terrorists’ goals would improve the condition of their groups. Regardless of the true state of bias between government and aggrieved minority groups, the government must address perceptions to avoid social polarization. By entering into negotiations with dissidents, British and Dutch governments were able to garner influence with the mass population through surrogate voices within the minority groups who were inclined to wage peace. This is consistent with the concept that social categorization is critical to social influence (Abrams et al., 2001, p. 286). The British and Dutch focus on building trusting relationships with influential members of groups; they aim to influence the mass population and provide high-status alternatives to those vulnerable to radicalization. Even those highly critical of the government can be valuable partners so long as they hold to the premises of a democratic society and nonviolent protest. In some cases, these individuals may actually be more valuable than “mainstream” Muslims because they are identified more closely with the subgroups most susceptible to radicalization.

E. SUMMARY

The UK and the Netherlands provide

some of the most developed programmes for outreach and dialogue with the Muslim community, including co-ordinating councils with government officials and clergy, youth outreach, women’s outreach, social cohesion

and dialogue programmes or events to support moderation and tolerance, and anti-discrimination efforts.” (Jane’s Islamic Affairs Analyst, 2009)

Their efforts are not based on liberal philosophy, a search for self-blame, or altruism. Instead, objective analysis of past victories and failures in asymmetrical conflict allowed these learning organizations to apply lessons learned to attract the mass population away from violent extremism. The British and Dutch accept the prospect of a generations-long conflict for the hearts and minds of their own populations and have successfully migrated balanced power strategies across religious, ethnic, and political contexts. From the actions of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, the United States might glean the framework for a successful national counterterrorism strategy, one that includes state, local, and nongovernment partners and introduces soft power strategies.

The United Kingdom and the Netherlands pursue strategies that incorporate both aggressive law enforcement to disrupt terrorist attacks and the radicalization process while simultaneously pursuing an “attraction” and engagement strategies that support the integration of Muslims into the larger society.

British and Dutch counterterrorism orientations evolved from a reactive “response” framework to one that proactively addresses the causal factors of terrorist attacks. The British and the Dutch viewed their homegrown terrorist threats as something more meaningful than individual attacks. Current British and Dutch approaches express strategic goals to minimize the polarization of their societies through both hard and soft power tactics. To do this effectively, the governments must first understand both the grievances of the mass population and the measures that can impact the target community.

Before the capacity to understand the causal factors of domestic radicalization can be developed, it is necessary to view counterterrorism as “system management” and to open a dialogue with the community. This approach logically leads to a unified mission that can be managed at a national level but must be implemented more locally. It leads to “deep security” (Ramo, 2009).

Through their regional, networked structure, the UK and the Netherlands have “bureaucratized” the exercise of imagination and developed an ability to manipulate the environment that can produce radicalization—or tolerance. Regional hubs of the counterterrorism effort in both the UK and the Netherlands tailor local strategies to local challenges, inform national policy makers of emerging domestic threats, and share best practices through a networked structure. This process enhances both regional capabilities and organizational adaptability. The regular rotation of developing leaders through joint-service regional offices ensures that fresh ideas reach national counterterrorism leadership and creates a culture of “jointness.” These structures and processes may tend to immunize the UK and the Netherlands from “failures of imagination, policy, capabilities and management,” the four underlying conditions that the 9/11 Commission described as the fundamental failures that resulted in the terrorist attacks of September 11 (Kean & Hamilton, 2004, p. 339), and may inform a range of activities and relationships that impact national security through the exercise of well-measured balanced power. The UK and Dutch counterterrorism apparatus has become a complex adaptive system.¹⁵

¹⁵ Ramo discusses “deep security” as an ability to manipulate environmental factors rather than be surprised by their impact, thus ensuring resilience to unexpected changes. Ramo compares homeland security to the “sandpile physics” of Danish scientist Per Bak, who suggested that “complex behavior in nature reflects the tendency of large systems to evolve into a poised ‘critical’ state, way out of balance, where minor disturbances may lead to events, called avalanches, of all sizes” (Ramo, 2009, p. 49). Ramo suggests that slow-moving environmental factors in society—like polarization—underlie major social changes—like revolution.

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VI. ENGAGING IN THE WAR OF IDEAS

He who does not trust enough, will not be trusted.

-Lao Tzu

A. ORIENTATION TO THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

A precondition for success in the ideological confrontation that is being waged in the United States is an understanding of the American Muslim perspective as it pertains to local and individual contexts. The government must accept that “the key to tackling Islamist fundamentalism and terrorism from the Islamist community is in the hands of moderate Muslims” (EurActiv Network, 2005). Counterterrorists must develop trusting alliances with Muslim leaders from this group without compromising the credibility of counter-radicalization partners. But before setting out to build liaison, decision makers should consider why the Islamist narrative reverberates in America and the contextual perspective of potential recruits. Moderate Muslims can provide great insight to the conservative and ultraconservative fringes of Islam, but the government must move beyond easy and amiable conversations to deal with radicalism. An understanding of the psychological and cultural influences that underpin radicalization should inform counter-radicalization strategies and may assist in anticipating the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Ultimately, the goal of engagement is to attract (or keep) the mass population’s loyalty and to diminish the development or recruitment of more terrorists. It is therefore necessary to assess Muslim perspectives at both the strategic and the tactical level.

1. Where Did All These Radicals Come From?

It is incumbent for the national security community to look to primary sources rather than political spin when they assess the threat. Bin Laden began talking about his “beliefs, goals, and intentions” and speaking to journalists in 1993 (Scheuer, 2006), declared war on the United States in 1996 (bin Laden, 1996), and in 1998 he delineated three basic grievances against the United States (Bin Laden, et al., 1998):

- The United States’ occupation of Islamic holy lands,

- Americans' murderous humiliation of Muslims, and
- The United States' support for Israel.

While many Americans would disagree with bin Laden's characterizations, argument is irrelevant: bin Laden made an emotional appeal simultaneously to Muslims, Arabs, and anti-Zionists, in form true to the character of a Type-A terrorist, one who is uncompromising and to whom negotiation will not appeal (Davis & Jenkins, 2002). For his audience, the September 11 attacks redeemed al Qaeda's honor and completed the previously disappointing performance of its premier operators, senior al Qaeda operations planner Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (KSM). KSM's nephew Ramzi Yousef had previously exploded a vehicle-borne bomb in the garage of the World Trade Towers that killed six people, but "said later that he had hoped to kill 250,000 people" (Kean & Hamilton, 2004, p. 72).

In the years since September 11, the West versus Islam ideology may have influenced many whom bin Laden sought to recruit to retaliate for what many Muslims consider "violations of their rights and demands for expanded rights" (Moghaddam, 2008, p. 122). It is likely that this sense of injustice was pronounced among Muslims with familial and historical ties to Muslim—majority countries and those who already considered the policies of the United States to be "unjust" or who might come to feel so due to perceived unfair treatment (Kohut, 2003). With bin Laden in the lead, Islamists had begun to retaliate for the humiliation that resonated in his 1998 manifesto.

According to group dynamics theory the American reaction to the September 11 attacks was predictable. The surprise attacks undermined feelings of security at both an individual and national level and resulted in a high degree of uncertainty about the future. Where and when would the terrorists attack next? The attackers had moved freely amongst the general population, in some cases for years. Which among the current population might also be a terrorist?

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, members of Muslim and Arab groups found themselves the victims of discrimination, alienation, and prejudice, both from their fellow Americans and at the hands of various government organizations. A grievance

cycle had begun. In response to violent racism and prejudice, some Arab- and Muslim-Americans developed (or had reinforced) a social identity more closely affiliated with their religion or ethnicity than their nationality.

This type of social categorization is formed by contrast with other categories (Hogg, 2005, pp. 203–06). Because 65% of American Muslims were born elsewhere and more than 39% of this group immigrated to the United States in the last 20 years (Pew Research Center, 2007), it is likely that many individuals within this population identify more closely with the populations in regions where the United States is engaged in military conflict. After all, in many cases, family and extended family, tribal or clan affiliations, ethnic similarities, and language provide a basis to identify with others from those regions. Therefore, it is likely that a more pronounced identification with “Muslimness” than “American-ness” is found in insular immigrant communities.

Immigrants lacking strong English language skills or who demure from the American mainstream culture are most vulnerable to the cultivation of in-group/out-group narratives and are more likely to accept stereotyping of the out-group (the larger out-group of secularized, non-Muslim population, and particularly the police and federal agencies) because people engage in what they perceive as “strategically self-enhancing or self-protective identification” (Abrams and Hogg, 2005, p. 160). The negative experiences that many American Muslims have endured in the wake September 11, due to mutually limited positive interaction with the non-Arab, non-Muslim population, tend to reinforce in-group/out-group polarization. As individual in-group/out-group categorization increased in the United States and around the world after the attacks on New York and Washington, the threat posed by al Qaeda morphed from an externally based “jihadi organization with a chain of command to a jihadi movement—an ideology motivating dispersed groups internationally” (Paris, 2007).

Increasing polarization and the threat to social order was fueled by expanding violence from both “global jihadists” and Western military action. Thus, the Islamist call from bin Laden extended well beyond his associates to the United States and other Western nations, where it threatens homeland security and social order through the potential progression of continuing ethnic and religious conflict.

2. Barriers to Prevention

The global jihadi-Salafi¹⁶ movement poses a significant challenge to law enforcement and intelligence since the radicalization phenomenon that drives it is indiscriminate and its indicators are subtle. Whether an individual is being radicalized is hard to detect, especially in the early stages, unless those close to the radicalizing person understand that changes in behavior could signal danger. Too often, these behavioral cues are recognized by those closest to the terrorist only in retrospect. The most promising commonality of Western “jihadists” is that the terrorists encountered a “spiritual sanctioner” who assisted their progression by bridging the self-identification and indoctrination phases of radicalization (Bhatt and Silber, 2007). This is a likely point to identify those vulnerable to recruitment to violent extremism. This is also the principal reason it behooves the counterterrorist to develop allies in the ranks of those who are positioned to have contact with individuals seeking spiritual guidance. In a hard power-only paradigm, these relationships are unlikely to form. This is troubling because it may also be the first and last opportunity for the law enforcement community to spot and intervene in the radicalization process before the recruit is a lost cause.

A truly preventive policy requires intervention well before Silber and Bhatt’s “indoctrination” phase. Fathali Moghaddam suggests that whether or not an individual becomes a terrorist depends on societal conditions that influence how a person perceives his or her personal and collective identities (Moghaddam, 2006, pp. 45–46). In the United States, the Muslim population carries cultural and emotional residue from the traditional home of the immigrant population’s sources that range broadly from Europe to Indonesia. Converts to Islam present a particularly worrisome context. As in the cases of John Walker Lindh, Jose Padilla, Daniel Boyd, and others, these neophytes in Islam have an inherently limited understanding of the religion and a limited understanding of nuanced

¹⁶ Silber and Bhatt describe this ideology as “the acceptance of a religious-political worldview that justifies, legitimizes, encourages, or supports violence against anything kufr, or un-Islamic, including the West, its citizens, its allies, or other Muslims whose opinions are contrary to the extremist agenda.... [R]ather than seeking and striving for the more mainstream goals of getting a good job, earning money, and raising a family, the indoctrinated radical’s goals are non-personal and focused on achieving ‘the greater good.’ The individual’s sole objective centers around the Salafi aim of creating a pure fundamentalist Muslim community worldwide” (2007, p. 21–22).

theological arguments that underpin al Qaeda's religious justification for terrorism; they are therefore unable to critically evaluate the guidance provided by the "religious authorities" to which they subscribe.

In many cases, hypocrisy in the foreign policy of the United States (real or perceived), paired with negative experiences with security services in their historical homelands and in the United States immediately after September 11, have resulted in diminished trust between the government and American Muslims. This mistrust must be overcome in order to build partnerships to combat violent extremist ideologies.

Polarization between Muslims and non-Muslims complicates this challenge. Non-Muslim Americans are

galvanized by terrorist attacks and suicide bombings in Iraq, Israel, Palestine, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Indonesia ... while the Muslim world is galvanized by the occupation of Iraq, abuses at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo, and images of civilian deaths and destruction." (Esposito and Mogahed, 2007, p. 65)

As a result, many Muslim communities feel isolated, and Muslim leaders may be suspicious of law enforcement and have concern regarding potential discrimination, misuse of information, and unfair treatment of individuals they might identify as vulnerable to radicalization.¹⁷ Such concerns may be exacerbated or exploited by some advocacy groups and opportunists who discourage Muslims from engaging independently with law enforcement and warn against contact with the government unless legal counsel is present (Council on American-Islamic Relations [CAIR], 2010).

3. The Resonating Islamist Narrative

The decision to engage in terrorism is a personal one, made within an individualized context: it is difficult and maybe impossible to predict who is or may become susceptible to the call of violent extremism. The messages that are common to

¹⁷ This observation is supported by the recent survey of Muslim attitudes in the Houston area.

statements published by al Qaeda¹⁸ and the statements of self-identified or convicted violent extremists reveal basic ideas that are used to recruit some Muslims to violence. For instance, the failed Christmas Day bomber, Abdulmutallab, recently published his second edition of *Inspire* magazine, an English-language Internet publication. In this magazine, Awlaki posits that the West is completely incompatible with the Muslim world and seeks to recruit individuals living in the West to “jihad” in order to fulfill what he interprets to be a religious duty—killing those who do not follow (his interpretation of) Islam (Joscelyn, 2010). Awlaki further encourages others to kill by using a “pickup truck ‘as a mowing machine, not to mow grass, but mow down the enemies of God’ ” (Aljazeera, 2010).

Another recent example of the resonating Islamist narrative was presented by Faisal Shazad (who pleaded guilty to trying to explode a vehicle bomb in New York’s Times Square on May 1, 2010) at his sentencing appearance on October 3, 2010. Shazad advised the presiding judge and the American public:

We are only Muslims trying to defend our religion, people, homes and land, but if you call us terrorists, then we are proud terrorists and we will keep on terrorizing you until you leave our lands and people at peace. (Hays & Neumeister, 2010).

In this instance and others like it, the fundamental theme that motivates Muslims to violent extremism is that Islam and Muslims are under attack by the West (and especially the United States)—a classic in-group/out-group framing that might easily appeal to a population isolated from the general public (or one that chooses to isolate itself) because of religious and in many cases ethnic differences. When an individual adopts this worldview, which might be reinforced by (real or imagined) experiences of persecution or victimization of self or group, he (or she) is susceptible to a call to violent protest or retribution for perceived injustice.

For those who complete the radicalization journey, the result is marked by

¹⁸ For a more detailed review of al Qaeda statements, video, and other al Qaeda propaganda, see the Nine Eleven Finding Answers Foundation (NEFA Foundation) website at <http://www.nefafoundation.org>, which provides an extensive list of al Qaeda propaganda.

an impassioned, personal call to duty in defense of an embattled Islamic community spread around the globe, held to be under attack by the United States and its infidel accomplices.... The aim is nothing less than global holy war, leading to a new order—powerful, puritanical, and unified—throughout the Muslim world. (Gompert, 2007)

Those who adhere to such Islamist narratives pose a potential threat to the United States. Examples of homegrown terrorism over the past two years vividly demonstrate that individuals and groups within the United States are susceptible to the influence of Islamist political philosophy that proposes violence to resolve political grievances and misrepresents Islam to justify those acts. It is therefore easy to understand the government's desire to interdict proponents of this philosophy even when, within certain limits,¹⁹ their freedom of speech is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

B. IMPERATIVE FOR BALANCED POWER

The challenge for the counterterrorist then, is to disrupt the radicalization process, to find ways of interfering with this narrative, and to develop a process whereby those vulnerable to the appeal of violent extremism can be attracted away from the destructive course early in the process. To be effective in the battle of ideas, the national security apparatus needs a balanced counterterrorism strategy—one that employs both hard and soft power.

Lessons learned in the UK and the Netherlands, as well as in asymmetrical conflicts overseas, demonstrate the complexity of the government's dilemma in confronting radicalization:

If they crack down too hard, they risk alienating the population and creating support for organizations where none previously existed. Failure to crack down, however, can decrease confidence in the state and make it easier for proto-insurgent [or terrorist] groups to mobilize would-be followers, since they need not fear that they will be arrested. In addition, a weak crackdown may lead rival communities to act on their own. If a

¹⁹ For detailed exploration of First Amendment case law and prohibitions on free speech, see Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School (particularly "Government Restraint of Content of Expression"), available at http://www.law.cornell.edu/anncon/html/amdt1toc_user.html

group is singled out for repression because of its ethnicity, religion, or other features, the salience of that identity increases. (Byman, 2007, p. 21–22)

In a liberal democracy, a repressive “crack down” is neither advisable nor desirable and in fact runs counter to Constitutional ideals. It is important for the government to distinguish between activities that pose a physical threat to lives or national security and activity that might encourage radicalization—progression toward terrorist activity. It is incumbent on the government to interdict terrorist activity with hard power whenever a threat to public safety or national security is imminent, but even in these cases, soft power can be applied to influence community response by sharing factual information about the arrest.

Law enforcement provides an avenue to disrupt speech that promotes violence or supports the terrorist narrative, but hard power is rarely the only option for addressing such a threat. Hard power may regularly be the least preferred method of dealing with a radicalizer. As mentioned above, intelligence collection around those identified as radical and charismatic influencers can provide an opportunity to identify those who pose the threat of physical attacks. Unless exercised in an effort to disrupt an imminent attack, the application of hard power should be carefully considered in terms of balancing the extent of the disruption against the ability to collect intelligence. Law enforcement action that might be characterized as petty or harassing may temporarily disrupt the influencer’s activity but could also increase the influencer’s status, allowing him to be portrayed as a martyr, increase his ability to raise funds, and draw sympathy from those with whom the West-versus-Islam narrative resonates. Hard power should instead be applied in cases where strategic interests can be met and the radicalizer can be permanently disrupted or deported.

A nuanced understanding of how to shape the social context of the ideological conflict is therefore a necessary precondition to a counter-radicalization strategy. For this reason, a successful national security strategy for counter-radicalization must place heavy emphasis on the judgment of regional and local authorities—and these authorities must be responsible for developing relationships that can influence ideological environment.

For example, such activity might be reasonably applied in the visa process in the United States. When foreign visitors promote or encourage violence against the United States or its allies as a legitimate method of political or religious expression, the “right” to visit might reasonably and immediately be terminated and the visitor deported without lengthy administrative process. Subsequent judicial consideration of asylum claims might be expedited to logical conclusion. By expediting these processes, the potential polarizing rhetoric of such a visitor (claims of prejudice and repression of Muslims by the government) could be limited, his credibility undermined, and the antagonistic visitor separated from the mass population. This action, revocation of the “right” to visit the United States, represents an aggressive hard power action that should only be taken after consideration of the subject’s impact on the local Muslim population.

Alternatively, soft power tactics might accomplish the same goal by diminishing the status and credibility of the violent extremist messenger (and thus negatively impacting the visitor’s influence and appeal to those vulnerable to recruitment), without generating new hostility from the Muslim community toward the government. In this scenario, empowered leaders of the Muslim community might pressure peer groups through internal politics to counter the Islamist messenger publicly on both a social and theological level. Rejection of the imam by his peer group might “lead the individual to move away from the group” because of his lowered self-esteem, and it might tend to diminish the radical imam’s appeal to his followers by undermining his credibility and social status (Tajfel, 1981).

It is likely that such rejection from the community would not be absolute, and while the radical imam would have less appeal to a broad audience, he might still maintain influence in small social circles. This is an opportune time for the government to exercise hard power because the disruption of the radical’s activity would be more palatable to the broad community. Counter-radicalization partners would play key messaging roles in such circumstances and would likely be highly motivated to do so because the accusation of the criminal activity on the part of the radicalizing imam would serve to reinforce the credibility and status of his former peer group.

1. Where to Begin: American Muslim Perspectives

Considering that only 35% of American Muslims were born in the United States, and that 56% are under the age of 40 (Pew Research Center, 2007, p. 16), the Muslim population's cultural immersion in the United States and its opportunities to assimilate or fully integrate with the general public is relatively limited, when compared to the Muslim experience in Europe and to other waves of migration in the United States. The events of September 11 also impacted the American Muslim experience and increased social isolation. At the individual level, American Muslims express suspicion of government agencies and perceive sanctioned and systematic bias due to increased security protocol. Community roundtable discussions by the FBI and DHS revealed "frustration with what they [American Muslims] considered to be government profiling or discrimination on the basis of ethnicity or religion"²⁰. To many Muslims,

it is clear that measures adopted by the government have had a profound impact on Muslims living in the United States. These measures have already disrupted the lives of thousands and left them in the grip of constant apprehension; they also have impeded the entry and full participation of the American Muslim community in the public square. (Haddad & Ricks, 2009, p. 6)

The continued perception of bias and discrimination so many years after September 11 is particularly disconcerting from a security standpoint. Because the American Muslim population is young, the United States stands to face increasing numbers of young Muslims who experience an identity crisis over the next decade. Based on patterns observed in Europe, and particularly in the UK and the Netherlands, it is logical to project similar security challenges in the United States from some second- and third-generation Muslims as they grow up in a polarized context.

Muslim leaders who have been interviewed in the Houston area almost unanimously identify the need to educate the Muslim American community about government agencies—and the need to educate government agents, especially law enforcement and security agencies, regarding Islam and cultural sensitivities.

²⁰ This frustration has been repeatedly and consistently expressed in interviews and successive roundtables by DHS and the FBI in the Houston area. Concerns are often specifically associated with screening processes at airports and ports of entry.

Encouragingly, these same conservative imams report that they are willing to cooperate with the government by hosting and providing training, and in some cases they have demonstrated willingness to report even members of their self-defined “group” that they believe to be “radicalized.” This cooperation, however, is contingent on trusting relationships. Notably, not all those interviewed held positive views of the government, security, or law enforcement—but where positive assessments were reported, the most important factor defining the relationships was the amount of contact between government agents and the individual leader.²¹

2. Building a Network

In order to counter and confront Islamist ideology, it is important for the United States to look within its own borders (as well as externally) to identify radicalizing influences. “Intermediaries—charismatic individuals—often help persuade previously law-abiding citizens to radicalize or even become violent jihadists. Social networks, virtual or actual, support and reinforce the decisions individuals make as they embrace violent jihad as does perusal of online materials” (Bjelopera & Randol, 2010, p.6). But perhaps more importantly at the regional and local levels, the security apparatus should assess and identify potential partners who have much higher influence with other Muslims than government agents. In turn, these alliances might be leveraged to have strategic impact.

Consistent with academic research, the UK and the Netherlands often initiate in-group/out-group contact privately between individual representatives of the government and the Muslim community, where intergroup influence is diminished and open dialogue can result in partnerships. Subsequent messaging to the Muslim in-group by counter-radicalization partners who lead ethnic or religious groups or subgroups might be more effective if conducted publically, because public in-group messaging can assist in establishing group normative behavior (Abrams et al., 2001, p. 270).

Data collected about Muslim attitudes at the international, national, and local levels indicate an imperative for the government to significantly increase direct

²¹ Survey of self-described conservative imams in the Houston area.

interaction between government agents charged with enforcement responsibilities and the American Muslim population because face-to-face contact can be effective in improving intergroup relations if the contact occurs under cooperative conditions (Wilder, 2001, p. 379).

Notably, Wilder's research also indicates that intergroup contact is more likely to change "in-group" (Muslim) attitudes toward the "out-group" (government) if the individual government agent is perceived as "typical" of the out-group. This tends to contradict the notion that it is advantageous to create a workforce that "looks like" the vulnerable group. Individuals designated to represent the government in face-to-face, cooperative contacts need not look or speak like the Muslim in-group; in fact, in order to change Muslim attitudes about government agencies, the use of "atypical" representatives may have little effect, as the atypical representative will be viewed as an anomaly within the government agency and will thus be unable to shift opinions of the government because he/she varies from the stereotype (Wilder, 2001, pp. 379–80).

It is essential that face-to-face contact be initiated between leaders of both the Muslim community and government agencies in order to establish credibility and commensurate status—a form of intergroup dialogue between individuals of similar perceived status. Leader-to-leader contact, in effect, could create a new in-group of counter-radicalization partners who are perceived to have reciprocal influence. In a sense, such a group of leaders could function as its own tribal alliance.

3. Centers of Influence

Developing interpersonal relationships between government leaders and Muslim centers of influence is therefore a critical first step in building a network that can address ideological challenges. To diminish the appeal of terrorism, it is necessary to redefine the national effort to identify and fully engage with centers of influence of at-risk and immigrant Muslim populations. These referent leaders have more credibility with their "in-group" than government agents and can therefore more effectively communicate the moral and theological foundations of an alternative ideology to Islamist extremists. With this influence, potential recruits might stall or reverse their progression toward terrorism

and affiliation with terrorist ideologies in order to maintain positive self-esteem and acceptance by the normative “in-group” (Ethier and Deaux, 2001, pp. 254–69).

The organizational model further suggests that some group leaders may be willing to adjust their personal goals to secure the loyalty of followers, recruit new members, or appeal to group members’ needs. This provides opportunities for the engaged counterterrorist. If one takes a cognitive approach to building relationships with centers of influence and leverages individual needs against the psychological need for positive self-esteem, it is possible to diminish the influence of radicalizing agents. In terms of asymmetrical conflict, this approach separates the ideological insurgent from the mass population.

In some cases²² these centers of influence, often imams, leaders within a mosque or influential nongovernment agencies or associations, express a personal desire and religious obligation to counsel individuals away from the path of violent extremism and toward a more mainstream interpretation of Islam (Elibiary, 2010). Self-policing by the Muslim community is important and might be effective, although only self-reported and anecdotal information is available to support this claim. Nevertheless, according to the secretary of DHS, there are many cases where community leaders “helped disrupt plots and have spoken out against violent extremism. They play a central role in addressing this issue” (Napolitano, 2010). Muslim leaders must recognize that the risk of self-policing is literally a risk of life and death. Trusting relationships between the government and these centers of influence are likely to increase their willingness to bring radicalizing individuals, as well as individuals who “drop out” of the mainstream religious education, to the attention of law enforcement early in the radicalization process.

Because the credibility of in-group leaders is higher than government officials within the in-group, centers of influence can also be valuable partners in the wake of terrorist acts or government application of hard power (arrests). By communicating planned government actions to investigate a terrorist act, government agents might

²² Based on a survey of conservative Muslim leaders in the Houston area.

increase cooperation from the community by informing community leaders of the reason for the interviews and seeking the community leaders' input regarding any specific cultural sensitivity that might reduce cooperation. In the event of an arrest of a community member, communication with local leaders immediately after the arrest would allow unclassified facts of a given case to be disseminated via an interpersonal network that could mitigate messaging from those who would intentionally sow discord and the Islamist narrative.

C. SOFT POWER REQUIREMENTS

The fundamental requirement for a successful soft power strategy is trust. Trust should be developed through sustained, regular interaction. The larger the network of trusting relationships, the more influence the network can have. If for no other reason than this, government agents at all levels have a vested interest in and obligation to build trusting relationships with the Muslim community. Federal statutes address civil liberties, counterterrorism, Patriot Act authorities, immigration, and international travel—all issues at the forefront of concern for Muslim community leaders.²³ State and local officials like mayors, health and human service agencies, fire departments, public health, and emergency management officials also have a vested interest to succeed in building trust with the Muslim community because terrorism and radicalization can affect safety and quality of life in their states and communities. State and local officials are critical to the success of such efforts because of their regular interaction with the Muslim community. These government representatives must be willing to listen, seek to understand grievances, and constructively address those grievances where possible.

D. DIALOGUE AND INFLUENCE

Differences of opinion during engagement should be expected, and even encouraged, since rational discussion of terrorism can only assist the argument for nonviolent protest. Varying viewpoints will also likely derive from different ethnic

²³ Recent survey by the FBI of Muslim community leaders in the Houston area.

groups and religious sects. In addressing Islamist group leadership or public forums, law enforcement officers should focus on each of the three levels identified in social identity theory:

Cognitive: Those speaking to a group that has grievances should emphasize that the audience and the speaker respect the same “American” group goals (preventing political violence, diminishing radicalization, increasing tolerance in society).

Evaluative: In discussing terrorism, concentrate on discussion of illegal or repugnant acts, i.e., targeting civilians with violence, matters that clearly conflict with “American” group goals.

Emotional: Reinforce feelings of accomplishment by recounting the government-community joint efforts toward “American” goals (community assistance in disruption of terrorist activity, law enforcement investigation of civil rights complaints, social or interfaith projects).

Engagement by government leaders with the Muslim community—even those who may harbor hostile or aggrieved feelings toward the government or law enforcement—should be a principal responsibility of government leaders responsible for counterterrorism missions. Regular and sustained engagement can result in a process of “recategorization (bringing members of two categories together under an inclusive, superordinate one), and decategorization (dissolving the problematic categories altogether, especially by facilitating contact between members of rival groups)” (Brannan, Esler, & Strindberg, 2001, p. 19).

In many instances, the immigrant population that arrives in the United States has migrated out of respect for the individual freedoms and opportunities provided by a free, capitalistic society. They also, however, carry with them an inherent distrust of intelligence and police officers, based on their experiences in their native countries where national authorities have great power and a different perspective on security. This apprehension must be overcome, and relationships with local leaders can dramatically assist the government. One misstep can set back these interpersonal relationships, which is why it is important for government contact to be consistent and sustained. The outreach effort is more than just “community policing.” The suggested approach for the counterterrorist is at an operational, rather than tactical level. Efforts in this arena should

be a major police effort that is coordinated with and supported by JTTF managers and intelligence analysts. Community leaders must be made aware of intragovernment communication—which is to be expected if those interested in counter-radicalization seek to effect positive change from both the community and the government. Joint community efforts can complement one another to gain three main benefits:

- Information about community reactions and perceptions may identify emerging trends;
- The feeling of consultation and partnership gives minorities the assurance that they are not the target and enlists their capacities to demonstrate individual and collective civic responsibilities; and
- The community knows that the police will forcefully clamp down on any backlash from non-Muslims .

Beyond these three benefits, and only when carefully considered, relationships built with community leaders can provide additional tools for counter-radicalization efforts. When groups lend themselves to an organizational model,

government policies and operations should encourage terrorism to limit itself and decline ... particularly the case in the United States where the government enjoys support and legitimacy. The objective is to exploit terrorist's weakness, their lack of resources, by depriving them of public support that would allow them to increase their resources (Tucker, n.d.)

Al Qaeda and like-minded groups can be defeated, and violent extremism can be mitigated, but not by coercive power alone. Those charged with the counterterrorism mission should incorporate soft-power tactics in national, regional, and local approaches to terrorism in order to attract partners from nongovernment and religious organizations who have high credibility for messaging and greater access to potential terrorists early in the radicalization process.

In reciprocal form, the benefit of dialogue and the exchange of ideas garnered through community outreach might be increased by involving Muslim leaders in the education of government officials who have regular contact with the community. Such involvement would demonstrate the government's willingness to consider community concerns, increase the status of those centers of influence that are willing to engage with

the government within their own in-group, increase job performance of government officials, and help refine contextual understanding of behaviors at the individual level.

Combining increased contact between the government and the Muslim community, and messages with actions that demonstrate a sincere intent to understand the communities' issues, to "serve and protect" both the Muslim community and national security, can be a powerful force to increase trust because this combination has the power to deconstruct negative stereotypes (Brewer & Gaertner, 2005, pp. 307–8). The prospect of collaborative relationships with the Muslim community promises to undermine the resonance of the West versus Islam narrative, increase government understanding of radicalizing influences as societal phenomena, as well as a threat, and increase Muslim communities' confidence that Islam and democratic society are compatible.

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VII. APPLYING THE LESSONS

In all fighting, the direct method may be used for joining battle, but indirect methods will be needed in order to secure victory. In battle, there are not more than two methods of attack—the direct and the indirect; yet these two in combination give rise to an endless series of maneuvers. The direct and the indirect lead on to each other in turn. It is like moving in a circle—you never come to an end. Who can exhaust the possibilities of their combination?

-Sun Tzu

A. STRATEGIC REALIGNMENT

The counterterrorism strategy of the United States is misaligned with the evolving threat from terrorism. After an extensive review of the circumstances surrounding the attacks of September 11, 2001, the first reflection by the 9/11 Commission was that “in the post-9/11 world, threats are defined more by fault lines within societies than by territorial boundaries between them” (Kean & Hamilton, 2004, p. 361). This observation should serve as a foundation for developing a national strategy to address the root cause of homegrown terrorism: societal polarization. The bipartisan commission issued its findings with multiple observations, opinions, and recommendations, summarized in a single sentence: “We believe the 9/11 attacks revealed four kinds of failures: in imagination, policy, capabilities, and management” (Kean & Hamilton, 2004, p. 339).

The NCTC and DHS were created to enhance the nation’s ability to synthesize, analyze, and coordinate operations, but the structure of these organizations does not facilitate coordination outside of Washington. Neither NCTC nor DHS have strong and authoritative mechanisms to coordinate activities at the operational level, where implementation occurs. Because they have little footprint outside of Washington, these entities can do little to that ensure strategic plans and policies are implemented throughout the country, particularly across federal and state jurisdictions. Neither NCTC nor DHS has an overarching counterterrorism strategy or coordination authority that reaches to the local level.

The FBI coordinates counterterrorism investigations via a network of JTTFs, but JTTF strategies have emphasized mitigation of existing threats, rather than underlying social conditions that result in radicalization. With 56 field offices and more than 100 JTTFs, the span of control for the FBI's Counterterrorism Division and its Directorate of Intelligence (which provides analysis and intelligence) is exceptionally broad. This condition can yield high degrees of uncertainty (Keren & Levhari, 1979, p. 1168). Each field office is currently developing its own strategy, absent an overarching vision and without coordination among DHS component agencies.

The same lack of coordination is evident between the federal government and state and local agencies, which do not coordinate strategies across agencies, departments, and jurisdictions in a way that produces mass effect—though in some instances, mass of force is achieved (for instance when manpower is shifted to a border region).

As suggested by the 9/11 Report, the United States ought to “engage in the struggle of ideas.” But in keeping with the external focus that permeated the government response, the 9/11 Report recommended only external measures (Kean & Hamilton, 2004, p. 375–79) toward that end. In the nine years since al Qaeda's attacks on the homeland, the United States has not ventured into the ideological arena in any meaningful way. Between 2002 and 2008, 81 individuals were indicted on terrorism related charges, “an average of about 12 individuals a year. But in 2009 alone, 42 people were indicted for jihadist-related crimes” (Jenkins, 2010). While the United States faced outward and employed mostly a hard-power response, violent ideologies have been allowed to foment at home.

During the same period, clusters—or groups or cells—of would-be terrorists in Houston, Texas; Raleigh, North Carolina; and Alexandria, Virginia had their plans to join violent extremists fighting the United States military overseas disrupted by arrests. It is easy to imagine such groups making the determination that they might be more valuable to their cause by attacking targets in the United States. It is not clear why these Americans chose to fight abroad rather than domestically. The United States can be thankful for this subtlety but should not depend on it.

In contrast to the approach taken by the United States, soon after domestic attacks by al Qaeda and its affiliates in the UK and the Netherlands, British and Dutch security services looked inward—not for the purpose of self-blame, but to consider the potential for extended social conflict within their own societies.

National security components of both nations studied their own population and considered the approach of other nations (Archick, 2008) and developed holistic strategies to bring the full force of government to bear in an ideological struggle against violent Islamist ideologies. Then the British and the Dutch devised or expanded networked structures to support the strategy and designated a central authority—ultimately one person—to be responsible for coordinating and supporting the counterterrorism effort. Their networked structures incorporate hard- and soft-power strategies that include local authorities and community leaders, tailor government action to local contexts, and share best practices.

Whole government strategies that employ soft power require a framework that supports actions to simultaneously eliminate, reduce, increase, and create contexts that influence radicalization. A coordinated effort that broadly impacts society is absent from the United States' domestic counterterrorism effort. Actions along these axes might be realized through effective implementation of a holistic strategy in the homeland.

In the UK and the Netherlands, broad approaches to counterterrorism provide an attractive alternative to hard-power-only strategies. Principal benefits of balanced strategy include:

- Information about community reactions and perceptions may identify emerging trends;
- Consultation and partnership between government and the Muslim community provides the assurance that terrorist activity, not the Muslim community, is the target of investigation. Consultation and partnership also enlists the community's capacity to demonstrate civic responsibilities; and

- The community knows that the police will forcefully clamp down on any backlash from non-Muslims. (Paris, 2007)

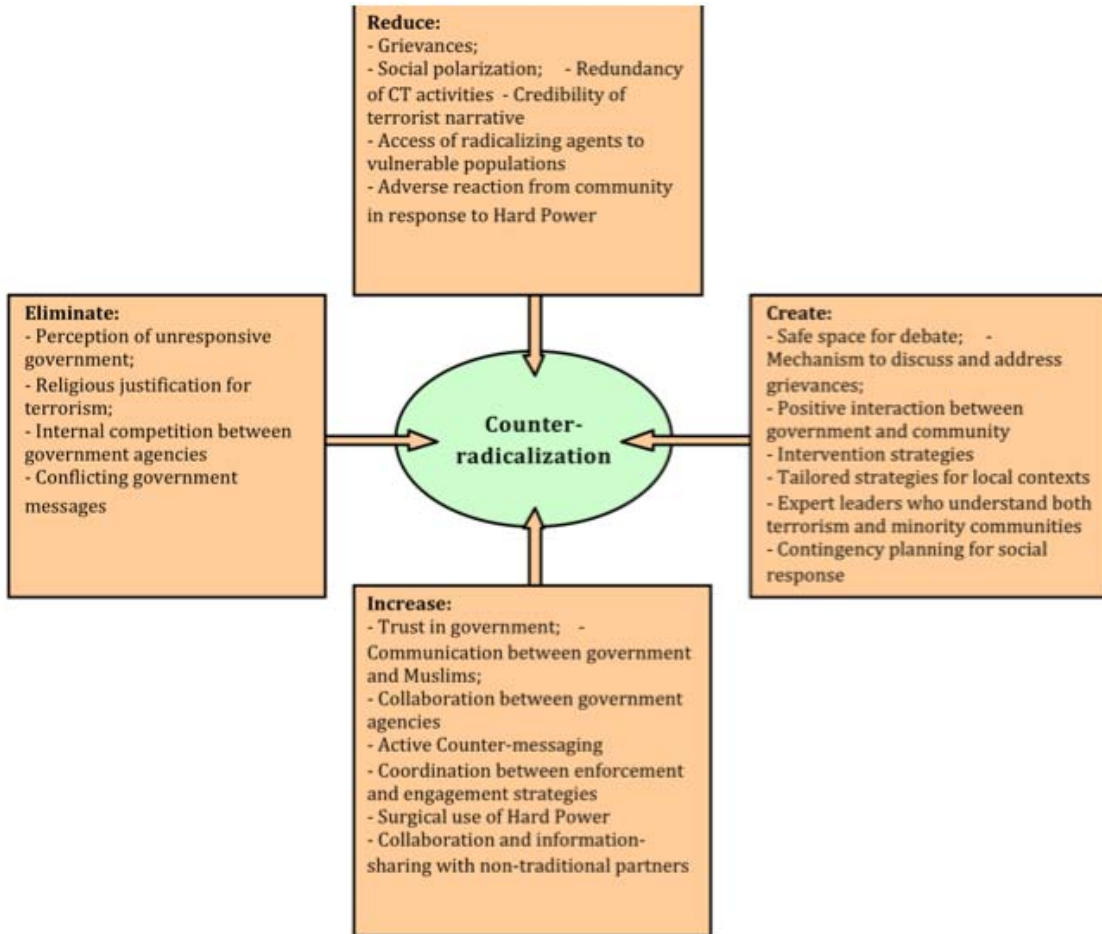


Figure 3. Approaches to Counterterrorism

B. DEVELOP A TRULY PREVENTIVE STRATEGY

The counterterrorism structure of the United States does not adequately support a preventive counter-radicalization strategy because it provides neither assurance that an overarching strategy is implemented at the local level nor a mechanism for collaboration between governments, the public, and religious organizations to address grievances of local and national concern.

Regional, networked structures facilitate the exercise of imagination in learning organizations because lessons from localized experiences can be shared broadly and adjusted or improved in other locales. In turn, this can inform national policy makers of emerging domestic threats and, at the national level, trends can be identified—allowing for projective analysis. This structure and process, particularly in an age of electronic communication, serves to enhance both regional capabilities and organizational adaptability without diminishing access to valuable information or compliance matters at the central coordination point (Ellis et al., 2003).

Without a strong, unified command, it is exceptionally challenging for individual departments and agencies to act together. The NCTC and a homeland security council might serve as logical apex organizations to create such a strategy. At the regional and local levels, a dedicated multiagency staff might effectively coordinate cross-agency actions and provide strategic analysis and long-range planning for a counterterrorism mission that requires continuous attention and focus on individuals and groups impacted by elements of many different agencies.

C. HOLISTIC COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

A holistic counterterrorism strategy that is coordinated and implemented at the local level might allow government and community leaders to tailor approaches to counter radicalization and diminish the appeal of terrorist ideologies.

The UK and Netherlands models demonstrate that joint-agency coordination at regional and local levels can help ensure that national strategies are resourced and prioritized correctly and in turn ensure that the central government is informed regarding the intricacies of the region.

Regional coordination points for “whole government” activities have the capacity to provide “full-service” responses to communities. A network of these structures might allow the national counterterrorism apparatus to improve its overall capacity to reduce radicalization and increase security. Regional coordination might provide the following benefits:

- Foster partnerships of police and citizens to involve the whole community in strategies to promote greater public safety;
- Take a problem-solving approach to identify and effectively address the underlying conditions that give rise to crime and disorder;
- Transform the organization to respond to community needs more effectively;
- Enhance understanding of interdisciplinary capabilities. (Scheider, Chapman, & Seelman, 2003)

In developing an outreach strategy, it is critical to understand the threat that radicalization poses in one's area of operations. "In other words, what is lacking in our understanding of ideology is an awareness of the local, cultural and communication contexts that allow for, even encourage, the viral spread of these ideas" (Corman, Goodall, & Trethewey, 2009, p. 3).

D. REGIONAL AND LOCAL OUTREACH EFFORTS

Outreach and counter-radicalization policies must be developed and implemented locally. "Looking in from the outside won't do. Abstract knowledge of the situation, even when detailed, does not capture the affective tone of the place, its nonverbal features, its emergent norms, or the ego involvement and arousal of being a participant." (Zimbardo, 2008, p. 322). Solutions can be supported from Washington, and headquarters agencies can provide tools to address radicalization, but interpersonal trust between local government officials and the Muslim community will ultimately have more influence on radicalization than political statements and government messaging because the interpersonal relationship has "practical credibility."

E. COGNITIVE APPROACHES TO COUNTER-RADICALIZATION

The United States would benefit from counter-radicalization efforts that build affinity to "American-ness" while diminishing the "pervasive crisis of identity being experienced by Islamic communities" (Moghaddam, 2006, p. 26). The hard-power-only approach in the United States has "spawned unprecedented levels of distrust toward law

enforcement within the Arab and Muslim communities in the United States” (Cole, 2009, p. 276). The practical reality of fourth-generation wars is that individual experiences influence group opinion by reinforcing or conflicting with in-group/out-group perceptions. “While terrorism is ultimately a group activity,²⁴ such a group will always comprise individuals, each of whom has a role to play in the movement. Anti-terrorism programs tend not to focus on individuals, but it is through understanding individual radicalization and its associated social and psychological qualities that effective ways of promoting disengagement can be developed” (Horgan, 2006). Therefore, an immediate goal of those who develop counter-radicalization strategies should be to consistently generate experiences that conflict with the terrorists’ frame of U.S. versus Islam conflict.

Ideologies are “shaped by historical and cultural narratives, present perceived political and religious circumstances, and economic, social and familial realities. [Ideological frames are] enabled by everyday exchanges and interpretations of opinions, rumors, and accounts (Corman, Goodall, & Trethewey, 2009, p. 3).

When contact between law enforcement and the Muslim community is mostly based on suspicion and the parties view one another as potential adversaries, communication is inhibited. Counterterrorism investigators need to increase positive contact with the community to better understand the context of an individual’s behavior. This concept is easily extrapolated to groups—and reinforces the point that government leaders should be directly engaged with leaders of the Muslim community to interrupt the psychological process that leads to radicalization.

The most efficient way to counter the appeal of terrorism and diminish radicalization, then, is for federal, state, and local government leaders to identify and fully engage with centers of influence (referent leaders) of at-risk and immigrant Muslim populations. Leaders of the counterterrorism mission at local and regional levels must become directly engaged. These representatives must be prepared to listen, seek to understand grievances, and constructively address those grievances where possible. It is

²⁴ From a psychological perspective, terrorists who adhere to the West versus Islam narrative often act to avenge a wrong associated with Western government’s actions against a group that the terrorist identifies with, be it fellow Muslims, Palestinians, Arabs.

important that federal, state, and local activities be conducted in concert in order to avoid conflicting actions and ensure common messaging. This aspect of the counter-radicalization mission is critical because “many terrorists act in a pro-social manner, both believing themselves to be serving society and judged by their in-group to be acting in its interest” (Victoroff, 2005, p.14). When governments provide a credible alternative to voice objection to existing policies and address community concerns, the argument for violent action is less compelling to the potential pool of extremists.

VIII. PARADIGM SHIFTS TO BE EMBRACED BY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY COUNTERTERRORISTS

For every complex problem there is a simple solution that is wrong.

-George Bernard Shaw

Rejecting the notion of a “zero sum game” is critical to success in counterterrorism and particularly in counter-radicalization efforts. The federal government, state and local governments, nongovernment agencies, and civil society can benefit when they work together to accomplish goals, even though the full spectrum of benefits may not be readily apparent. Widely shared technology (like cell phones and the Internet) and nearly unfettered travel make for a high degree of awareness and contribution. These circumstances allow small inputs to have significant effect on a broad array of situations.

“Interconnectiveness” serves as a powerful tool for good or evil, dramatically lowers the cost of actions, and increases creates the potential for small numbers of people to have real impact on the masses. For these reasons, many organizations have a vested and tangible interest in contributing to joint projects: corporate consciousness is not wholly altruistic (Brafman & Beckstrom, 2006). The value of the collective effort increases with each new member so there are important incentives for trusting and collaborating with others.

Contributions of each member of “interest communities” bring additional insight and different resources that can be applied to the planning and execution of actions intended to address local challenges. Incorporating different perspectives into such a process can unleash a project’s potential (Brafman & Beckstrom, 2006, p. 176). For this reason, continual expansion of the network might be an indicator of the organizations’ health (Gerenscer et al., 2008).

A. DECENTRALIZATION

Decentralization and networks increase the likelihood of an organization's survival and success. A decentralized and networked structure allows for contributing partners to capitalize on their individual strengths to be applied toward the group's goal. Each partner is expected to leverage its individual network in a given region (Brafman & Beckstrom, 2006, p. 176) to create a structure and functionality that can both quickly adjust to a fluid environment and provide sufficient oversight to ensure that quality control is maintained. Well-developed networks are aware of local dynamics and can address emerging threats by bringing the right people, skills, and resources together at the right time and in the right place. Thus, a decentralized and networked structure provides qualitative value and financial incentive and innovation in a high-trust environment (Covey & Merrill, 2006, pp. 13-29).

Scientific studies support this theory and might help overcome objection to a leader's sense of "giving up control" to partner with other organizations. It is well established that when compared to highly centralized organizational structures, networks are more adaptive and equally efficient and that networks are "superior in terms of learning new contingencies and developing innovative procedures" (Ellis et al., 2003). This means that formation of partnerships is in the interest of all parties because it positively impacts effectiveness and the bottom line. Therefore, it is important and in everyone's best interest to build and maintain trusting relationships that increase the speed of organizational actions. Such opportunities exist or can be realized where the interests of government, business, and civil society overlap (Gerenscer et al, p. 53).

B. NONTRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership in the global environment requires investment in the community's success. The globalized environment demands a different kind of leader than found in traditional hierarchical organizations where security is valued more than information. To function effectively in a decentralized and networked environment, organizational leaders must accept a collaborative posture: no single person can be in charge of every project; instead many people must play many roles (Bryson, 1995). Leaders of disparate

organizations must be willing to take the risk of extending trust (Covey & Merrill, 2006, p. 223) and supporting change for others by releasing absolute control (Gerenscer et al., 2008, p. 200).

The release of absolute control, however, does not equate to diminished responsibility for the leader. It is incumbent on leaders to exercise “smart trust,” a decision-making process that combines a willingness to trust with an analytical assessment of just how much confidence one might have in a partner or partner organization. As people and organizations work together on superordinate goals, trust should increase, reputations will be built, and personal relationships that might be leveraged for a different project are formed. This interpersonal dimension is fundamental to success in the global environment due to the varying roles that leaders play.

Whether formally designated leader or serving in the capacity of an informal influencer, the individual(s) who link collaborative entities are critical to a successful venture. A decentralized and networked organization is inherently a complex system, so the person who serves as a “catalyst” must be capable of and intent upon understanding the perspectives of system partners (Brafman & Beckstrom, 2006, p. 125) and effect change. They serve as leaders and should be endowed by parent organizations with the authority to interact with the cross-interest group and to carry plans from the collective to the parent organization because their principal role is to inspire trust (Covey & Merrill, 2006). Here again, it is important for parent organization leaders to relinquish absolute control. Instead, the senior leader is responsible for creating an environment where work can be accomplished.

Here, effective communication within and between organizations can provide a thorough understanding of other component interests and their ability to affect project outcomes. This is central to the collective’s ability to drive change. It is therefore important to win the trust and active participation of those leaders with high degrees of interest and power (Bryson, 1995, p. 338).

C. HETERARCHIES AND NEW LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Heterarchies may facilitate a solution to overlapping interests, decentralized networks, and new leadership competencies. Those charged with the counter-radicalization mission must recognize the impact of globalization across all economies and cultures. These changes require an organization to become more adaptive to meet local challenges and opportunities that might have strategic impact. The current terrorist threat emerges from learning networks that present a difficult challenge for bureaucratic systems like the government hierarchies in the United States. When hierarchical systems are unlinked, the threat posed by terrorists intensifies. A heterarchical structure—somewhere between hierarchy and network—“provides horizontal links permitting different elements of an organization to cooperate, while they individually optimize success criteria” (Stephenson, 2009, p. 1).

The combination of these themes—globalization, adaptability, and terrorism—is particularly relevant to today’s homeland security professional because it emphasizes the potential impact of individuals on entire systems that determine how individuals feel about their own security at individual and collective levels. Implementing change in a way that plays to the strength of an interconnected world, across many disparate groups, can provide leverage in other situations. Collaboration between companies, nongovernment organizations, the government, and civil society provides the ingredients for a more resilient society where new trusting relationships are perpetually generated between people and groups. These interlinkages can cause a nation to become more cohesive, more efficient, and empowered to make positive change.

Local engagement should inform regional assessments, which in turn might inform or refine national strategies. A unified joint coordination structure, one that coordinates hard and soft power across multiple federal, state, and local agencies and interacts regularly with the Muslim community would have the ability to identify grievances and assess threats and community reaction to the government’s disruption tactics. Unless the government engages with those directly impacted by radicalization, grievance mitigation and threat resolution is not possible. For some in the government, this will be a walk in the dark, fraught with discomfort and fear of change. Others have

already begun the journey and deserve a coordinating mechanism to light the path ahead. This administration will set a course for either the polarization of American society—which may lie only one successful terrorist attack ahead—or a future where interlinked and collaborating partners approach radicalizing influences jointly.

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IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe the 9/11 attacks revealed four kinds of failures: in imagination, policy, capabilities and management.

-9/11 Commission

The addition of soft-power tools to the existing hard-power strategy provides real opportunities to engage in the battle of ideas. Ideas cannot be arrested or targeted with bombs. Ideologies are best countered by creating experiences that conflict with preconceived stereotypes and the opponent's narrative. Polarization in some communities within the United States has already reached the precipice of violence. Attracting the confidence of the American Muslim population through a holistic, whole-government effort might provide the best avenue to mitigate long-term social divisions, violent extremism, and the retributive cycle that will inevitably follow. As depicted in the strategy canvass below, the current deterrent strategy has severe long-term limitations, not least of which are social impact and the ability to collect information from volunteers within the community.

As demonstrated by experiences in the UK and the Netherlands, soft power enables society, and particularly vulnerable groups, to counter ideology at the base level, the "ground floor" of Moghaddam's "staircase to terrorist acts" because it changes the personal context of potential recruits to terrorism. A balanced-power approach also increases available options for dealing with threats and thus can be more effective than individual efforts.

A. STRATEGY: IMPLEMENT A BALANCED STRATEGY

- Soft-power tactics should be employed to counter the concept that Islam and democracy are incompatible. The government should support Muslim community leaders to achieve this goal.
- The president of the United States should establish a homeland security coordination group (HSCG) within the NSC that functions similarly to the

joint chiefs of staff. The staff's principal responsibilities would be to create and update an overarching strategy and ensure that the strategy is sufficiently resourced by component agencies to the HSCG's regional commands.

- Homeland security agencies should work from a holistic strategy: Regional Outreach and Operational Coordination Centers (ROOCC) should be established to coordinate a “whole government” approach to counterterrorism and counter-radicalization, tailoring actions to local contexts. NCTC is the logical apex organization.
- ROOCC staffs should develop and coordinate two-pronged counterterrorism strategies that include both hard-power and soft-power tactics to address strategic goals.
- In order to implement these strategy changes, the National Security Council should create a working group composed of subject-matter experts with both academic and practical experience in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency policing.
- The NSC should implement a pilot program to test the strategy in an area where both positive relationships and active engagement is ongoing.

B. STRUCTURE: DEMAND “UNITY OF EFFORT” ACROSS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- The HSCG should initiate a pilot ROOCC to identify primary and secondary centers of influence and community grievances program at the regional level. The ROOCC should initiate or expand relationships outside the government to create a diverse community of resources.
- The ROOCC should work with key leaders to resolve legitimate grievances of the community and encourage projects affecting the centers of influence identified.
- Research in academic form regarding social dynamics should be conducted and published in unclassified form for public consumption.

C. TOOLS TO SHAPE THE IDEOLOGICAL BATTLEFIELD

- Key leaders of nongovernment organizations (NGO), religious groups, local policy makers, the private sector, the DHS, FBI, local law enforcement, and academia should jointly develop and support a curriculum to educate and inform the public regarding matters of community concern.
- Once ROOCC staffs are firmly established, the joint service entity should plan, coordinate, and oversee all aspects of the counter-radicalization mission within their region. These staffs would implement their plans both as principals and through dedicated resources from participating agencies. Composition of these staffs would vary from region to region (determined by the overarching threat) but should include sufficiently senior officials from federal agencies, as well as state and local authorities, to coordinate and oversee activities of component agencies. Thus, the full array of tools available to the megacommunity could be applied to counter social polarization.
- The ROOCC should produce or oversee production of locally relevant intelligence products that can serve to inform local strategists and local policy makers. Ideally, these bulletins would contain information that may be disseminated to the public. These products might improve communication with the Muslim community, increase awareness, and tend to deter terrorists who recognize that increased public awareness of threat means a more challenging operational environment for those with nefarious intent.

D. IMPACTING SOCIAL IDENTITY IN A POSITIVE WAY

- The DHS and FBI should coordinate more closely in efforts to bridge the gap between federal and state and local law enforcement, with an aim to develop domestic policing standards for the counterterrorism mission.

Adoption or a return to community-policing models is an optimal condition that enhances intelligence collection and the public's trust of the government.

- New laws are needed to expedite removal of noncitizens who are of concern to national security. Countering violent Islamist rhetoric in some instances is as easy as deporting noncitizens who promote violence. This is currently a years-long process that allows an identified radicalizer to incite hatred and recruit terrorists, despite residing in the country illegally.
- Safe space for public debate of controversial issues should be created to allow grievances to be vented. HSCG leaders should be prepared and empowered to address hard questions frankly and encourage critical debate from multiple perspectives.

E. CONCLUSION

The threat from homegrown Islamist terrorists will not just go away. During just ten days of October 2010, two separate incidents provided a glimpse of what may lie ahead from homegrown terrorists: Abdel Hameed Shehadeh, who tried to “fly to Pakistan and to Somalia and tried to enlist in the United States Army in the hope of joining the Iraqi insurgency,” was arrested in Honolulu, Hawaii (Fahim, Rashbaum, & Reporting, 2010); and naturalized American citizen Farooque Ahmed of Ashburn, Virginia, was arrested for “planning to bomb Metro stations near the Pentagon and ‘kill as many military personnel as possible’ ” (Glod & White, 2010).

The deep resonance of the West versus Islam narrative promises that this threat will continue to grow so long as the United States surrenders the ideological battlefield by pursuing only hard-power solutions to terrorism: this approach fuels Islamist rhetoric. As al Qaeda has morphed from a group to a movement, so too must the nation's counterterrorism apparatus realign its approach to incorporate soft power to diminish radicalization.

NSS 2010 recognized the imperative to counter domestic radicalization and to empower communities to aid in the fight, but it does not delineate roles and missions.

Counter-radicalization is an entirely new mission for domestic governance and counterterrorists. With limited resources and limited experience, the effort is at risk of being poorly implemented and poorly executed. And yet, to do nothing is not an option.

Regional and local approaches are critical. Population density, the existence of ethnic enclaves, and socioeconomic standing of immigrant populations differ from place to place. Radicalization is evident in rural as well as metropolitan areas. Police forces, particularly in tough economic times, may be unable to support community policing models, and Muslim populations may relate in virtual rather than in geographic communities. These circumstances require tailored approaches that:

- 1) Align with domestic as well as external threats;
- 2) Ensure “unity of effort” across government agencies and include nongovernment and religious community leaders;
- 3) Provide tools to shape the ideological struggle; and
- 4) Aim to diminish in-group/out-group polarization by supporting social identities that are consistent with both Islam and national allegiance.

Regional Outreach and Operational Coordination Centers (ROOCC) represent an opportunity to coordinate engagement activities and tailor local approaches across all levels of government, while simultaneously increasing cooperation between government agencies and creating a new space for government-community collaboration.

ROOCCs should be staffed by senior representatives of federal, state, and local organizations who are also recognized as subject matter experts in counterterrorism, policing, and sociology. Charged with principal responsibility for coordinating hard- and soft-power strategies, the ROOCCs should orchestrate community outreach and counter-radicalization initiatives of participating agencies and serve as a nexus to nongovernment agencies and religious groups with an interest in counter- and deradicalization efforts. Members of these ROOCC teams would take lead roles alternately, based on the nature of an individual program and individual specialties. They might also provide enhanced outreach (in more complex deradicalization efforts) and training to partner agencies at regional and local levels and partner with academic institutions to study social influences that impact the region.

While it is unrealistic to expect ROOCCs to offer a panacea for the challenge of terrorism, such an organization would have the capacity to understand local contexts and develop sustained relationships more effectively than any existing structure. Therefore, ROOCCs offer an enhanced capacity to develop tailored strategies to mitigate the growth of violent extremism. Finally, such a group is well positioned to support counter- and deradicalization efforts by the Muslim community through trusting relationships because the ROOCC would be both informed by and separate from those responsible for the application of hard power.

The next successful terrorist attack in the United States will likely bring with it media frenzy and bitter political posturing that could preclude the development of a truly preventive counterterrorism policy. This thesis recommends ROOCCs be considered in detail now, while the opportunity to realign and positively engage still exists. Forewarned is forearmed.

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